BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD: A FIRST LOOK AT LESSONS LEARNED FROM KATRINA

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

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BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD: A FIRST LOOK AT LESSONS LEARNED FROM KATRINA

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2005,

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Tom Davis (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Davis of Virginia, Shays, Ros-Lehtinen, Gutknecht, Souder, Platts, Duncan, Turner, Issa, Brown-Waite, Porter, Marchant, Westmoreland, Dent, Foxx, Waxman, Owens, Sanders, Maloney, Cummings, Kucinich, Davis of Illinois, Clay, Watson, Lynch, Van Hollen, Ruppersberger, Higgins, and Norton.

Also present: Representative Shaw.

Staff present: Melissa Wojciak, staff director; David Marin, deputy staff director/communications director; Jennifer Safavian, chief counsel for oversight and investigations; John Hunter, counsel; Rob White, press secretary; Drew Crockett, deputy director of communications; Grace Washbourne, Shalley Kim, and Mindy Walker, professional staff members; Teresa Austin, chief clerk; Sarah D'Orsie, deputy clerk; Jay O'Callahan, research specialist; Phil Schiliro, minority chief of staff; Phil Barnett, minority staff director/chief counsel; Kristin Amerling, minority general counsel; Karen Lightfoot, minority communications director/senior policy advisor; Robin Appleberry, Jeff Baran, and Michael McCarthy, minority counsels; David Rapallo, minority chief investigative counsel; Earley Green, minority chief clerk; and Jean Gosa, minority assistant clerk.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. The committee will come to order.

Welcome to today's hearing, which marks this committee's first look at lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina.

Two months ago former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich testified before our Federal Workforce Subcommittee about the need to move the Government to an "entrepreneurial" model and away from its current "bureaucratic" model so that we can get Government to move at the speed and effectiveness of the Information Age. "Implementing policy effectively," he said, "is ultimately as important as making the right policy." Indeed, a policy that can't be implemented effectively is no policy at all.

We are here today because, in the tragic aftermath of Katrina, we are again confronted with the vast divide between policy creation and policy implementation. Confronted with the life-and-death difference between theory and practice. Confronted with the

daunting challenge, as some of our witnesses will discuss this morning, of understanding that we both did things wrong and did wrong things.

We have all spent much of the past 2 weeks examining the aftermath of the catastrophic disaster. It has become increasingly clear that local, State, and Federal Government agencies failed to meet the needs of the residents of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Now it is our job to figure out why, and to make sure we are better prepared for the future.

First and foremost, our thoughts and prayers go out to the hurricane's victims, their families, their friends. The loss of life, property, livelihoods, pets, and dreams have been enormous. And we salute all Americans who have stepped up to the plate in any way that they can.

At this stage, we agree we need to conduct our oversight in a manner that does not interfere with the rescue and relief efforts. We agree that many questions need to wait. No one wants to take people away from the massive job at hand.

But I also think some issues can and should be looked at right now. Our Members want to begin doing oversight, and the American people are demanding it as well.

We can begin contributing to the dialog this morning by looking at the emergency plans in other major metropolitan areas—places that potentially face, and in fact have faced, similar catastrophic events, natural or manmade. This review serves two purposes: it can help make sure others are better prepared, and it can guide and inform the subsequent work we will be doing specific to Katrina.

Whatever the threat, Katrina has forced officials across America to take another look at disaster plans that may not be as solid as they previously thought. This process of reevaluation will be the focus of the committee's first post-Katrina hearing. Later, when it is appropriate, we can turn to the myriad of other questions that are literally begging for answers.

This is not the time to attack or defend government entities for political purposes. This is the time to do the oversight we are charged with doing. Our goal should be to investigate aggressively what went wrong and what went right. We will do it by the book and let the chips fall where they may.

It is hard not to point fingers and assign blame in the aftermath of this tragedy. I understand human nature, and I understand politics. But I think most Americans want less carping and more compassion. And I think most Americans want a rational, thoughtful, bipartisan review of what went wrong and what went right. I think most Americans want to know that we will be better prepared the next time. They need that assurance.

In his letter to me last week requesting hearings, the committee's ranking member, Mr. Waxman, raised many important questions that need to be addressed: whether FEMA has been organizationally undermined and underfunded; whether evaluation plans were adequate; whether opportunities to better safeguard the New Orleans levee system were missed; why relief and medical supplies and support were seemingly slow in arriving; and several others.

I think the letter also overlooked many other questions that also need to be asked, and prematurely faulted the Federal Government for all the shortcomings. In fact, local and State government failures weren't mentioned.

That is also a part of our oversight review, because we are the committee on federalism here, and the coordination between Federal, State, and local is a very critical component in implementing any policy. We undoubtedly need to figure out why the evacuation plans and emergency communication systems were woefully deficient. We don't need to prematurely paint the picture that these are solely or primarily the responsibility of one entity or the other.

And the worst lesson to be gleaned from this disaster is that all answers to shortcomings in emergency preparedness can somehow be found in Washington. But we can and should lead the way when it comes to questions.

It remains difficult to understand how government could respond ineffectively to a disaster that was predicted for years, and for which specific dire warnings had been issued for days. If this is what happens when we have advanced warning, I shudder to imagine the consequences when we do not. If ever there were a time for leaders at all levels of government to come together and review and coordinate their emergency plans, it is now.

So let us focus on the task at hand. Let us focus on how policy implementation became so wildly divorced from policy creation.

On why there was such a depth of government hesitancy at all levels.

On why we confuse getting the government ready with getting people ready.

It is true and important to emphasize that Katrina's scale and scope were unprecedented.

But the cities and counties represented here today face the possibility of similar catastrophic events. In fact, they previously adjusted their plans in response to past hurricanes, earthquakes, terrorist attacks, and angry men on tractors. I am sure they have begun adjusting again.

They are here today to discuss whether they are better prepared than New Orleans, and why.

What triggers full-blown action and who do they talk to first?

Are they further along in developing clear and realistic evacuation plans that meet the needs of all residents? Will they hesitate to issue mandatory evacuation orders? Is there an agreement on what mandatory means?

Would they better be able to inform the public about what to do and where to go?

Do they know who will communicate with whom, and are they sure everyone will be speaking the same language?

Do they understand the weather advisories they get from forecasters?

Do they expect Federal officials to wait for specific requests, or will they be able to gather the information needed to make them?

The questions are many and the answers are few. Today we begin the process of clarifying failure and searching for improvement.

Perhaps the biggest problem with Katrina is that many people didn't listen before the hurricane arrived, and communication was impossible after. I hope we can start communicating more clearly this morning.

[The prepared statement of Chairman Tom Davis follows:]

Opening Statement of Chairman Tom Davis
Government Reform Committee hearing:
"Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina"
September 15, 2005

Good morning, and welcome to today's hearing, which marks this Committee's first look at lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina.

Two months ago former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich testified before our Federal Workforce subcommittee about the need to move the government to an "entrepreneurial" model and away from its current "bureaucratic" model so that we can get government to move at the speed and effectiveness of the Information Age.

"*Implementing* policy effectively," Speaker Gingrich said, "is ultimately as important as *making* the right policy."

Indeed, a policy that cannot be implemented effectively is no policy at all.

We are here today because, in the tragic aftermath of Katrina, we are again confronted with the vast divide between policy creation and policy implementation.

Confronted with the life-and-death difference between theory and practice.

Confronted with the daunting challenge, as one of our witnesses will discuss this morning, of understanding that we both did things wrong and did wrong things.

We have all spent much of the past two weeks examining the aftermath of this catastrophic disaster. It has become increasingly clear that local, state, and federal government agencies failed to meet the needs of the residents of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Now it's our job to figure out why, and to make sure we are better prepared for the future.

First and foremost, our thoughts and prayers go out to the hurricane's victims. Their families. Their friends. The loss of life, of property, of livelihoods and dreams has been enormous. And we salute all Americans who have stepped to the plate to help in any way they can.

At this stage, we agree we need to conduct our oversight in a manner that does not interfere with rescue and relief efforts. We agree that many questions need to wait; no one wants to take people away from the massive job at hand.

But I also think some issues can and should be looked at now. Our members want to begin doing oversight, and the American people are demanding it as well.

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faced, similar catastrophic events, natural or manmade. This review serves two purposes: it can help make sure others are better prepared, and it can guide and inform the subsequent work we'll be doing specific to Katrina.

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Later, when it's appropriate, we can turn to the myriad other questions that are begging for answers.

This is not the time to attack or defend government entities for political purposes. This is a time to do the oversight we're charged with doing. Our goal should be to investigate aggressively what went wrong and what went right. We'll do it by the book, and let the chips fall where they may.

It's hard not to point fingers and assign blame in the aftermath of tragedy. I understand human nature, and I understand politics. But I think most Americans want less carping and more compassion. I think most Americans want a rational, thoughtful, bipartisan review of what went wrong and what went right. I think most Americans want to know we'll be better prepared the next time.

In his letter to me last week requesting hearings, Mr. Waxman raised many important questions that need to be addressed: whether FEMA has been organizationally undermined and under-funded; whether evacuation plans were adequate; whether opportunities to better safeguard the New Orleans levee system were missed; why relief and medical supplies and support were seemingly slow in arriving; and several others.

But I believe the letter overlooked many other questions that need to be asked, and prematurely faulted the federal government for all governmental shortcomings; in fact, local and state government failures are not mentioned *at all* in the letter.

For example, Mr. Waxman's letter wondered why "there were no federal plans for evacuating residents without access to vehicles" and why "the Department of Homeland Security fail[ed] to ensure basic communications capacity" for first responders. We undoubtedly need to figure out why evacuation plans and emergency communications systems were woefully deficient; we don't need to prematurely paint the picture that these are solely, or even primarily, federal government responsibilities.

Probably the worst lesson to be gleaned from this disaster is that all answers to shortcomings in emergency preparedness can be found in Washington. But we can and should lead the way when it comes to questions.

It remains difficult to understand how government could respond so ineffectively to a disaster that was predicted for years, and for which specific dire warnings had been issued for days. If this is what happens when we have advance warning, I shudder to imagine the consequences when we do not. If ever there were a time for leaders at all levels of government to come together and review and coordinate their emergency plans, it's now.

So let's focus on the task at hand. Let's focus on how policy implementation became so wildly divorced from policy creation.

On why there was such a depth of government hesitancy at all levels.

On why we confused getting the *government* ready with getting *people* ready.

It's true, and important to emphasize, that Katrina's scale and scope were unprecedented. This was a big, big storm.

But the cities and counties represented here today face the possibility of similar catastrophic events. In fact, they've previously tweaked their plans in response to past hurricanes, earthquakes, terror attacks, and angry men on tractors. I'm sure they've begun tweaking again.

They're here today to discuss whether they're better prepared than New Orleans, and why.

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The questions are many, and the answers are few. Today we begin the process of clarifying failure and searching for improvement.

Perhaps the biggest problem with Katrina is that many people didn't listen before the hurricane arrived, and communication was impossible after. I hope we can start communicating more clearly this morning.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I would now recognize our distinguished ranking member, who has also taken a lead in this and who I am proud to work with on this, Mr. Waxman, for his opening statements.

Mr. WAXMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hurricane Katrina was a disaster of monumental scope. It destroyed an American city and forced a million Americans from their homes. The financial costs will be immense and the human costs incalculable.

As the Nation confronts this disaster, we in the Congress have two major challenges. First, and most important, we must care for those who have been harmed and uprooted. They have been through a horrible ordeal, and we need to provide assistance with housing, medical care, and schooling, and we need to begin the process of rebuilding.

Our second challenge is to find out how this could have happened. The committee recently received an extraordinary document. It is a FEMA document from May 2004, and it predicts that a hurricane striking New Orleans could cause "a mega-disaster." Over a year before Katrina, FEMA was predicting that a Category 4 hurricane could hit New Orleans, flood the city, and force a million people to evacuate.

FEMA recognized that such a hurricane would "create a catastrophe with which the State would not be able to cope without massive help." The document then states: "The gravity of the situation calls for an extraordinary level of advanced planning."

And I want to ask, Mr. Chairman, that this document be made part of the record.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Without objection.

[The information referred to follows:]

Combined Catastrophic Plan for Southeast Louisiana and the New Madrid Seismic Zone

Scope of Work
FY 2004

1. Purpose

The purpose of this scope of work (SOW) is to obtain enhanced disaster response planning and technical and project management support. It will assist FEMA, State, and local government to enhance response planning activities and operations by focusing on specific catastrophic disasters: those disasters that by definition will immediately overwhelm the existing disaster response capabilities of local, State, and Federal Governments.

The initial areas of focus will be New Orleans, Louisiana, and the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ) in the Central United States. The goal of this project is to improve Federal, State, local-government, and private-sector ability to respond to a catastrophic disaster in order to prevent loss of life; minimize the number of injuries; house, feed, and protect up to a million + survivors and evacuees; and begin transition to long-term recovery in the affected areas.

Contractor planning and technical expertise is needed to: 1) research and analyze scenarios, concepts, and issues relating to response operations; 2) help develop operational plans, strategies, and support mechanisms; and 3) ensure that response operations are flexible and comprehensive in meeting the mission of the Department of Homeland Security. The Contractor also may be required to produce deliverables associated with mitigation, preparedness, prevention, or recovery as they apply to response operation goals associated with the scope of work. In order to accomplish this:

- The Contractor must be prepared to develop a range of support documents or tools for decision making and operations that may include but not be limited to: issue and information papers; research and analytical reports; plans; decision trees; standby contracts; mutual aid agreements; standard operating procedures; guidelines; models; specifications; templates; geographic information systems (GIS) based documents; and documents associated with exercises, as required.

- The Contractor also must be prepared to function in subject matter areas that may include but not be limited to: essential elements of information; information management; emergency management; emergency support functions; law enforcement; political science; public and private sector law; economics; and construction, as required.

- The Contractor will employ in all work products the all risks and all hazards approach to emergency management including terrorism (e.g. weapons of mass destruction and cyber attack).

Work completed by the Contractor under this SOW should support the eventual development of an introductory general plan and a set of sub-plans that would constitute a comprehensive plan. The proposed plan will be designed so that parts of the plan can be revised, updated, and distributed periodically without requiring revision of the whole plan. Each part of the plan will clearly identify the organization or agency responsible for maintaining that part.

Development of the plan(s) will be in three stages.

- **Stage One** - The first stage will be a functional exercise involving: FEMA headquarters, FEMA Regions IV & VI, the State of Louisiana (LA), thirteen parishes in LA, the National Weather Service, Federal Departments and agencies staffing the Emergency Support Functions (ESF), EMAC representatives, and representatives from Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas. From the exercise results, a base catastrophic hurricane disaster plan will be developed. **(Reference Page 7 for further of exercise requirements.)**

- **Stage Two** - The second stage will be development of the full catastrophic hurricane disaster plan to include Emergency Support Function Annexes and Support Annexes.

- **Stage Three** - The third stage will develop a catastrophic earthquake plan for the City of Memphis and Shelby County Tennessee.

While this Scope of work covers all three stages, only the Stage One will be funded under Task Order 001 of this Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA). Quotes should only be for the exercise and the development of a Catastrophic Base Plan for Louisiana.

The Contractor must develop and execute a functional exercise in Louisiana on or about July 16, 2004, (dependent upon response activities) for approximately 6-8 days and deliver a final Base Plan by September 30, 2004.

2. Special Considerations

Language used in this SOW references the Federal Response Plan and related organizational components (response teams, etc.) and program elements (program titles, etc.) that may remain in effect until the National Response Plan is completed, adopted, and implemented. The Contractor will be responsible for incorporating and reflecting these changes as instructed by the Project Manager. How and when to incorporate these changes will be determined by the Project Manager and conveyed to the Contractor.

The need for a complete catastrophic plan for New Orleans has urgency due to the risk that accompanies the advent of the annual hurricane season. The Contractor may be instructed to accelerate the development of the plan to meet this urgency. There may be a need to also prioritize and accelerate Contractor deliverables in the NMSZ site plan.

The Contractor will coordinate with FEMA and the State and local government what specific products and what process to follow in developing the plan. A general list of deliverables is contained in the sections "Tasks" (below) however, additional or more specific deliverables and/or guidance may be added from 1) planning sessions associated with this SOW; 2) after action reports from exercises and disasters; 3) presidential executive orders and other authoritative directives; 4) other catastrophic and emergency management documents and planning endeavors; and 5) other sources having substantive bearing on developing the plan.

The Contractor will develop a plan that has at its core: the priorities of an operational plan during the first two weeks of a catastrophic event; a vulnerability assessment with a time phased

response; an analysis of currently available resources and what resources will be needed; a gap analysis; and a resource utilization plan.

The Contractor will factor into the plan that a hurricane, earthquake, etc. large enough to constitute a catastrophe in one State will not confine its destruction to that State's borders and that disaster response activities in other States will have to be implemented concurrently, thereby making even more demands on resources and capabilities.

The Contractor will not attempt to develop a numerical definition of what constitutes a catastrophic disaster. Instead, the focus will be on developing numbers needed for planning against capability shortfalls in each individual emergency function. The plan will address at what point in each functional area resources and services will be exhausted in a "normal disaster", what numbers are to be used to plan for additional resources and services needed in a catastrophic disaster, and where these resources and services will be obtained.

The Contractor must remember and integrate into the plan that a catastrophic event will produce a chaotic and degraded environment and that the planned response must address the possible loss or malfunction of various layers and sections of all levels of government, the private sector, and voluntary organizations. The intent is to provide an optimum plan for a State to implement and a plan that encompasses the needs and capabilities of the entire country as it relates to a catastrophic event in a State. The Contractor will build redundancy into each segment of the plan to allow for the widespread destruction and failure of response capabilities inherent in a catastrophic disaster. An area of particular emphasis will be the possible need to reconstitute local and State government authorities, responsibilities, capabilities, missions, and resources. As part of this effort, the Contractor will work with the DHS Office of State and Local Government Coordination, through the Response Division, to assist in developing these issues and the appropriate response strategies.

The Contractor will develop one but no more than three small tabletop exercises that may be administered during planning meetings of Federal, State, and local government officials and emergency managers. The exercise scenarios will present catastrophic level circumstances to the participants to assist them in better decision-making by helping them to anticipate the full range and nature of decisions that will need to be made.

3. Background

Federal Role in Disasters

FEMA is responsible for the coordination and implementation of programs within the full range of Federal emergency activities. These programs are implemented under various Federal mandates including the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121, et seq.). The Stafford Act provides the authority for the Federal Government to respond to disasters and emergencies in order to provide assistance to save lives and protect public health, safety, and property. The Federal Response Plan (FRP) implements the Stafford Act and is designed to address the consequences of any disaster or emergency situation for which there is a need for Federal assistance and coordination. The FRP describes the basic mechanisms and structures by which the Federal Government will mobilize resources and conduct activities to augment State and local response efforts in major disasters and emergencies regardless of cause. The FRP with its associated processes and standard

operating procedures has proven to be an effective mechanism for delivering Federal assistance in most disaster scenarios. A copy of the FRP can be found at www.fema.gov.

However, the emergency management community has long feared the occurrence of a catastrophic disaster, an event having unprecedented levels of damage, casualties, dislocation, and disruption that would have nationwide consequences and jeopardize national security. The operational readiness, resources, and capabilities required to respond to the truly catastrophic event are yet to be tested or fully evaluated. There is concern throughout the emergency management community that the existing plans, policies, procedures and resources will not be adequate or appropriate to address the mega-disaster.

After September 11, 2001, knowledge that a catastrophic disaster could strike at any time in any number of ways has gained even more credence with the array of weapons terrorists could have in their arsenal and have voiced their williness to use. To the "normal" risks causing a catastrophe can be added weapons of mass destruction (chemical, radiological, bacterial) and cyber attack. Catastrophe also could be the result of a convergence of any number or combination of any of these risks.

In conformance with current FEMA policy and priorities, it is now necessary to either broaden the scope and application of existing mechanisms or to create new, independent response planning mechanisms to ensure efficient, consistent, coordinated operations throughout all ~~phases of a catastrophic disaster or emergency. FEMA will address the needs created by a catastrophic disaster or emergency by providing leadership in coordinating—with other~~ departments and agencies, states, and localities—the full integration of Federal, State, local, and private sector interagency response activities. These considerations will be incorporated into the new National Response Plan (NRP) as required under the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and Homeland Security Directive 5.

Over the years, various efforts have been undertaken to address catastrophic disaster readiness. This scope of work will develop site specific plans, use them to develop a template(s) for other site-specific planning, and address related issues as needed.

Annex A

Southeastern Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan

1. Catastrophic Planning in Louisiana

Louisiana is highly susceptible to hurricanes because the topography is generally low-lying river delta and some of the most densely populated areas are actually below sea level. Land subsidence and channels in the Mississippi River contribute to the loss of several square miles of wetlands and barrier islands each year, causing severe storm surges and flooding every hurricane season. One mile of wetlands can reduce storm surges by one foot, as well as reducing wind energy but at the current rate of loss, the wetlands buffer is estimated to be depleted within forty years.

Approximately 1,733,000 people live in the thirteen southeastern parishes of Louisiana that would be most threatened by a hurricane. This includes the City of New Orleans. The affected parishes and their populations are:

Ascension	77,000	St. Charles	48,000
Assumption	23,000	St. James	21,000
Jefferson	455,000	St. John	43,000
Lafourche	90,000	St. Tammany	191,000
Orleans	485,000	Tangipahoa	101,000
Plaquemines	27,000	Terrebonne	105,000
St. Bernard	67,000		

The most dangerous hurricane would be a slow-moving Category 3, 4, or 5 hurricane that makes landfall at the mouth of the Mississippi River, moves northwest of and parallel to the river, and then crosses New Orleans and Lake Pontchartrain. Various hurricane studies suggest that a slow-moving Category 3 or almost any Category 4 or 5 hurricane approaching Southeast Louisiana from the south could severely damage the heavily populated Southeast portion of the state creating a catastrophe with which the State would not be able to cope without massive help from neighboring states and the Federal Government.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness (LOEP) believe that the gravity of the situation calls for an extraordinary level of advance planning to improve government readiness to respond effectively to such an event. The few highways leading out of the New Orleans area would be blocked early by tides, wind, and surge in Lake Pontchartrain. Such a catastrophic hurricane could result in significant numbers of deaths and injuries, trap hundreds of thousands of people in flooded areas, and leave up to one million people homeless. The geographic situation of Southern Louisiana and the densely populated New Orleans area would complicate response problems and quickly overwhelm the State's resources. Some anticipated problems are listed below:

- Over one million people would evacuate from New Orleans. Evacuees would crowd shelters throughout Louisiana and adjacent states.

- Hurricane surge would block highways and trap 300,000 to 350,000 persons in flooded areas. Storm surge of over 18 feet would overflow flood-protection levees on the Lake Pontchartrain side of New Orleans. Storm surge combined with heavy rain could leave much of New Orleans under 14 to 17 feet of water. More than 200 square miles of urban areas would be flooded.
- It could take weeks to "de-water" (drain) New Orleans: Inundated pumping stations and damaged pump motors would be inoperable. Flood-protection levees would prevent drainage of floodwater. Breaching the levees would be a complicated and politically sensitive problem: The Corps of Engineers may have to use barges or helicopters to haul earthmoving equipment to open several hundred feet of levee. To further complicate the situation, the flood would probably disable the New Orleans District of the Corps of Engineers.
- Rescue operations would be difficult because much of the area would be reachable only by helicopters and boats.
- Hospitals would be overcrowded with special-needs patients. Backup generators would run out of fuel or fail before patients could be moved elsewhere.
- The New Orleans area would be without electric power, food, potable water, medicine, or transportation for an extended time period
- Damaged chemical plants and industries could spill hazardous materials.
- Standing water and disease could threaten public health.
- There would be severe economic repercussions for the state and region.
- Outside responders and resources, including the Federal response personnel and materials, would have difficulty entering and working in the affected area.

2. Tasks

Work Plan

The Contractor shall provide support for at least one but no more than three meetings in Louisiana for two to three days each to present and discuss the plan with Federal, regional, state, and local officials and emergency managers. The Contractor can expect to attend meetings in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area to discuss the Federal portions of the plan; these may be averaged to one a week.

The Contractor shall develop a catastrophic plan using the FRP/NRP as a guide and produce 1) a Basic Plan, 2) Emergency Support Function Annexes, and 3) Support Annexes. A Recovery Function Annex supplied by the FEMA Recovery Division will be included in the final plan. The plan shall integrate and not conflict with plans and structures developed by the State of Louisiana and individual cities and parishes.

The basis plan and all of the annexes shall be titled the "Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan", and shall be designed so that parts of the plan can be revised, updated, and distributed periodically without requiring revision or re-distribution of the entire plan. It shall be designed to serve as the framework for future catastrophic plans in the same jurisdictions for other catastrophic risks such as terrorism involving the use of weapons of mass destruction. Each part of the plan shall identify the organization or agency responsible for future maintenance of that part of the plan.

The Contractor will develop, execute, and evaluate a functional exercise with FEMA and the State of Louisiana. The scenario will feature a catastrophic hurricane striking southeastern Louisiana. Exercise participants will consist of management level personnel who will be presented with operational situations and required to make decisions on how to respond to the special circumstances of a catastrophic event including limiting factors and issues. The Plan will also identify critical trigger points for use in decision-making.

The participants will number between 100 to 150 personnel from FEMA HQ (10-12), Region VI (10-15), Federal ESFs (84), Louisiana (40), and representatives from EMC, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas.

To assist the Contractor in developing a responsible quote, please be advised that the FEMA Region VI exercise design team has collected existing plans, models, and studies and will have ICP Predictive Modeling and Damage Maps.

The Contractor will work with the existing exercise design team in developing the following standard documents for this emergency management exercise:

- Concept and Objectives
- Master Scenario Events List (with Implementers)
- Exercise Plan
- COSIN (Control and Simulation Document)
- Evaluation Plan
- Participant Orientation Material (Player Handbook, Controller Guide, Evaluator Guide, Communications Directory, & Training Slides)

The Contractor will have all draft documents relating to the exercise available for final review 15 days prior to the exercise. After review and comments by the exercise design team, the Contractor will have final exercise documents available two days prior to the exercise start date.

After the exercise, the exercise evaluation phase will differ from the traditional format; the Contractor will work with FEMA and the State to produce Incident Action Plans and associated Base Plan. **The Contractor is reminded that the second stage will be the development of the full catastrophic hurricane disaster plan to include Emergency Support Function Annexes and Support Annexes and should not be included in the response to the Request for Quote of April 2004.** The Second stage may also include development of the materials listed in the last bullet of each Annex as described below. ("Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required").

The catastrophic plan will contain the following annexes that will be developed as per the caveats noted in Section 2. Special Considerations. Individual tasks may be eliminated, added, exchanged, or emphasis increased or diminished as the specifics of catastrophic operational needs and planning are ascertained; this applies to the exercise development phase and the final Annexes due in the Second Stage. The bulleted items are concerns and objectives to be in the annexes and should be reflected in exercise play. They are presented alphabetically and not in order of priority.

A. Communications Annex

The communications portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall ensure the provision of communications support and capability to responders to achieve maximum communications before and during the event, any required temporary communications, and restoration of permanent communications.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Recommend measures for improving interoperability of communications between emergency-management agencies, including such topics as frequency allocation, cell-phone phone usage and controls, avoidance of frequency jams, and use of various radio bandwidths.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

B. De-Watering Annex

The US Army Corps of Engineers will have the responsibility of developing and implementing a plan for removing floodwater from the City of New Orleans ("de-watering") in conjunction with local levee districts and local political jurisdictions. The Contractor shall determine what consequences this will have vis-à-vis FEMA, State, and local governments response capabilities and responsibilities that will have to be integrated into the plan.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Develop a plan that details the coordination and decision process for implementing the USACE plan for removing floodwater from New Orleans metropolitan area.
- Make recommendation to the USACE on their plan to include temporary and long term repairs to the pumping stations, and removal of debris that prevents access or obstructs flood control and drainage structures.
- Plan for restoration of power grid necessary for operation of electrical pumps.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

C. Direction and Control Annex

This portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall provide for collecting, analyzing, processing, and disseminating information about potential or actual disasters or emergencies to facilitate the planning, decision making and overall activities of governmental response.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Assess the survivability of the State, Parish, and Levee District emergency management offices, communication equipment, and alternate power supplies.
- Plan for coordination of FEMA, Louisiana OEP, and local-government response measures.

- Plan for assessment of damage and determination of urgent response requirements.
- Plan for use of a joint public information center and dissemination of emergency public information.
- Plan for time-phased deployment of resources.
- Outline the process for communicating and prioritizing requests for assistance
- Identify areas of conflicting interests (governmental, socio-economic, etc.).
- Identify potential legislative actions that might be necessary to implement effective response and recovery plans.
- Plan for continued plan maintenance and update.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

D. **Health and Medical Services Annex**

The Health and Medical Services portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall provide for coordinating resources in response to public health and medical care needs following a major disaster or emergency, or during a developing potential medical situation.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Develop strategies to support local health and medical service providers.
- Assess the work that Louisiana State University (LSU) has done in this area under the Louisiana Board of Regents Millennium Health Excellence Fund.
- Assess the ability of each medical facility and special-needs shelter to operate after the storm hits.
- Determine immediate staffing needs while storm approaches and after the storm hits.
- Set priorities for staffing and supplying hospitals, and other medical facilities in the affected area.
- Identify transportation needs for staff and supplies.
- Plan support to local medical facilities for pre- and post-storm evacuation of patients and staff.
- Identify sources for specialized transportation equipment suitable for evacuation of critical patients.
- Plan for maintenance of public health in short and long-term shelters and in emergency housing facilities.
- Plan for managing mass casualties.
- Determine how the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) could be used.
- Plan for vector control activities.
- Plan for inoculation of emergency response workers.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

E. **Infrastructure Annex**

This portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall provide for lifesaving and life-sustaining actions and damage mitigation through technical advice and evaluation; engineering ~~services, construction management, and inspection; emergency repair of water and wastewater~~

treatment facilities; provision of potable water, ice, and emergency power; and real estate support. It will reflect that while New Orleans and other areas may remain underwater for a prolonged period of time, other areas in Louisiana may need the infrastructure response activities associated with "normal" disasters.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

Debris Removal

- Assess the current adequacy of Parish debris plans.
- Develop an overall debris strategy, consistent with FEMA debris policy, to include burn sites and other planning considerations that are needed.
- Estimate anticipated quantity of debris for disposal in order to develop a debris plan.
- Identify available capacities at existing landfills.
- Review existing statutory requirements (i.e., load limits, air quality) and determine if provisions for modifying the Debris Annex are needed following a disaster.
- Identify potential staging areas for debris for sorting and reduction.
- Identify and prioritize by Parish the major arteries that should be cleared of debris.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

Emergency Ice, Water, and Power Requirements and Distribution.

- Identify quantity of ice and water needed by parishes per day.
- Identify distribution points for water and ice within the parishes.
- Identify parish capability to receive and distribute the commodities.
- List critical facilities and power generation specification within each parish that should be prioritized for emergency generators.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

Infrastructure Restoration

- Develop strategy or plan to support local utility service providers.
- Plan to support levee district pumping operations.
- Plan for removal of debris from public and private property.
- Plan for restoration of critical transportation systems.
- Plan for restoration of utilities (power, water, sewer, gas).
- Plan for restoration of public facilities (schools, fire stations, government buildings).
- Plan for restoration of commerce and general economic recovery.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

F. **Mass Care/Housing Annex**

The mass care and housing portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall support the delivery of mass care services of shelter, feeding, and emergency first aid to disaster victims; the establishment of systems to provide bulk distribution of emergency relief supplies to disaster

victims and the collection of information for the purpose of reporting victim status and assisting family reunification.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Assess the current shelter plan for Southeast Louisiana.
- Estimate the number of people requiring short and long-term housing. Develop a strategy for short/long term housing of successive amounts of people.
- Identify availability and needs of short and long-term housing options in the area.
- Incorporate FEMA's catastrophic housing strategy.
- Plan for construction and installation of temporary housing facilities based on an acceptable percentage of the total population.
- Identify support services for shelters, and both short and long-term housing facilities and outline procedures to activate those resources.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

G. Prevention & Mitigation Annex

The Prevention & Mitigation portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall provide for the protection of life and property and the prevention of future losses through a comprehensive, risk-based emergency management program of preparedness & preventive techniques.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Develop a plan to rapidly conduct hazardous material assessment and monitoring
- Recommend measures that could be taken to prevent or lessen the effects of hurricane storm surge and flooding (i.e. hardening fixed facilities, evacuating mobile facilities, implement techniques) to minimize hazardous material incidents.
- Develop a traffic control plan to facilitate controlled access in and out of the impacted area. Develop procedures to identify and consider mitigation opportunities throughout disaster operations.
- Develop criteria by which to allow for the phased reentry of the general population.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc., to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

H. Reentry Annex

The reentry portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall provide for the safe, phased, and controlled return of private citizens and the private and public sectors into the disaster area for permanent residence. It will reflect that while New Orleans and other areas may remain underwater for a prolonged period of time and prohibit rapid reentry, other areas in Louisiana may be able to permit victims to return to their homes and or businesses within a timeframe associated with "normal" disasters.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Develop criteria to use in determining the sequence and rate of return for private citizens and the private and public sectors.
- Identify complications associated with controlling reentry (logistical, psychological, and social) and develop strategies to reduce the negative effects of those complications.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

I. **Search, Rescue, and Medical Annex**

The search and rescue portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall provide for the location, rescue, on-site treatment, and re-location of stranded citizens, and for the rescue and relocation of hospital patients and other special populations.

The Contractor shall but not be limited to performing the following:

- Assess the current search-and-rescue capabilities in Louisiana and neighboring states.
- Devise a plan to include direction and control for the rescue of stranded people.
- Develop a strategy for estimating the number of citizens to be rescued, develop a priority cascade to use in deploying resources, and develop a strategy on rescuing successive amounts of people by air, land and sea.
- Identify and plan pick-up points for movement of rescued people. Develop a medical support strategy to rescue successive amounts of people.
- Identify hospitals and medical staff needed to support search and rescue operations.
- Identify responsibility for conducting preliminary damage assessments.
- Identify medical staff augmentation capabilities from unaffected areas in the state.
- Devise a plan/methodology to identify federal and EMAC resources needed.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc., to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

J. **Security Annex**

This portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall assess the overall need for and elements of a security annex.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Identify and arrange transportation for people who would be needed to provide security for hospitals and shelters.
- Identify and arrange transportation for public safety officers to secure urban areas.
- Develop a plan to allow emergency response personnel into the disaster area following a storm.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

K. Transportation Annex

The transportation portion of the plan developed by the Contractor shall 1) assist all responders requiring transportation capacity to perform response missions and 2) serve as a coordination point between response operations and restoration of the transportation infrastructure.

The Contractor shall perform but not be limited to performing the following:

- Identify additional transportation and transportation support resources needed to move disaster victims, response personnel, and supplies in and out of the impacted areas in order to conduct cleanup and restoration activities.
- Identify airports suitable for use as staging areas for reception, storage, and distribution of relief supplies.
- Determine distribution of relief supplies based on priority of need.
- Develop a transportation plan for movement of general supplies into the affected area.
- Develop a transportation plan for movement of life-support supplies to short- and long-term shelters.
- Identify airfields, runways, hangars, and other transportation facilities that could be used for temporary emergency housing.
- Develop ready-to-be-implemented mutual aid agreements, contracts, staffing plans and specifications, supplier lists, equipment needs and specifications, data base protection, etc. to facilitate rapid response capabilities at the catastrophic level, as required.

Mr. WAXMAN. As this remarkable document shows, Katrina wasn't a surprise. This wasn't a disaster that no one could have predicted, as the President said. Over a year ago, FEMA new that a Category 4 hurricane could cause a mega-disaster, that the State was not prepared to cope without massive Federal intervention, and that an extraordinary level of advanced planning was needed.

Yet, apparently, FEMA—and the rest of the Government—was caught unprepared.

Now, Congress has a responsibility to find out why our Government failed so miserably, when the stakes for so many Americans were so high.

There is a dispute in Congress about how to conduct an investigation. The House and Senate Republicans, their leadership, proposed a bicameral investigation committee. But they want Republicans to control the committee. And they didn't consult with the Democrats in developing the proposal. Now, the Democratic leadership is rightly skeptical and has proposed a truly independent commission.

As the principal oversight committee in the House, we on this committee have an obligation to conduct our own independent investigation. And if we are serious about this, as the chairman indicated he is, there are two steps we should take right away.

First, we should request basic documents from the agencies. I have given the chairman drafts of letters that should go to the Department of Homeland Security, the Corps of Engineers, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the White House, that seek information that any credible investigation must have. These letters ask basic questions, such as what was the plan for responding to the hurricane and how was it implemented. I hope that we will be able to announce today that we have reached a bipartisan agreement to proceed with these document requests.

Second, we need to hear from Michael Brown and Michael Chertoff. These are the two Government officials most responsible for the inadequate response, and the committee should call them to testify without delay, and, if need be, subpoena them to come in.

Today's hearing is entitled, "Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina." Well, I look forward to hearing the testimony from the witnesses today, a very distinguished group. The chairman has called you all together. And I especially want to hear from the people in Los Angeles. But I don't want to be so parochial that I only want to hear about Los Angeles. But I must admit that I am perplexed by the timing of this hearing. It is going to be hard for D.C., Miami, and Los Angeles to learn what lessons to draw from Katrina until we fulfill our obligation to investigate the disaster in New Orleans and find out what went wrong and why.

It is too early to know what the lessons of Katrina are, but it is not too early to learn lessons from the waste, fraud, and abuse that has characterized the reconstruction in Iraq and in the spending of the Department of Homeland Security. Over the last 5 years, the record of this administration's handling of Federal contracts has been one of persistent and costly mismanagement. Under the administration, the value of no-bid contracts have skyrocketed, oversight of Federal contracts have been turned over to private compa-

nies with blatant conflicts of interest, and when Government auditors and whistleblowers do flag abuses, their recommendations are often ignored.

In Iraq, billions have been appropriated for the reconstruction effort, yet, oil and electricity production remain below pre-war levels. Waste, fraud, and abuse by Halliburton and other contractors have squandered hundreds of millions of taxpayers dollars, and domestically the record is no better: the FBI spent $170 million on a virtual case file system that does not work, the Department of Homeland Security spent another $200 million on a border monitoring system of cameras and sensors that also doesn't work, and the contract to hire Federal airport screeners has been plagued by poor management and flagrant abuses.

As we prepare to pour billions into the relief and recovery effort in the Gulf Coast, we cannot allow these mistakes to be repeated. We need contracting reforms, and more and better oversight. The taxpayer cannot afford to give another blank check.

One of the fundamental Constitutional obligations of Congress is to oversee the executive branch. Despite the efforts of the chairman, who has asked more questions than most of his colleagues, Congress has too often failed to conduct meaningful oversight, and the consequences have been perilous. When we fail to insist on accountability, we reward blunders and we invite abuse.

We must not travel down this road again. As the entire Nation now knows, Government incompetence and a failure to insist on accountability can have dire consequences.

I am pleased we are holding at least this hearing. We have to do much more than this hearing. And I just hope that the Republican leadership in the Congress isn't trying to set up a bicameral commission to study and then a select committee that is on the floor today and Republicans trying to control everything so that we don't really find out what is happening.

If there is ever a time for bipartisanship—and this committee has demonstrated more than most committees along those lines—the time is now. And if there is ever a committee that ought to be doing its job, as our committee has done in the past, the time is now as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Henry A. Waxman follows:]

Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman, Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Government Reform Hearing on
"Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at
Lessons Learned from Katrina."
September 15, 2005

Hurricane Katrina was a disaster of monumental scope. It destroyed a major American city and forced a million Americans from their homes. The financial costs will be immense and the human costs incalculable.

As the nation confronts this disaster, we in Congress have two major challenges. First and most important, we must care for those who have been harmed and uprooted. They have been through a horrible ordeal, and we need to provide assistance with housing, medical care, and schooling. And we need to begin the process of rebuilding.

Our second challenge is to find out how this could have happened.

The Committee recently received an extraordinary document. It's a FEMA document from May 2004. And it predicts that a hurricane striking New Orleans could cause — and I quote — a "mega-disaster." Over a year before Katrina, FEMA was predicting that a category 4 hurricane could hit New Orleans, flood the city, and force a million people to evacuate.

FEMA recognized that such a hurricane would — and I quote — "create a catastrophe with which the State would not be able to cope without massive help." The document then states: "the gravity of the situation calls for an extraordinary level of advance planning."

I ask that this document be made part of today's hearing record.

As this remarkable document shows, Hurricane Katrina wasn't a surprise. This wasn't a disaster that no one could predict. Over a year ago, FEMA knew that a category 4 hurricane could cause a "mega-disaster," that the state was not prepared to cope without massive federal intervention, and that an extraordinary level of advance planning was needed.

Yet apparently, FEMA — and the rest of the government — was caught unprepared.

Congress has a responsibility to find out why our government failed so miserably when the stakes for so many Americans were so high.

There is a dispute in Congress about how to conduct an investigation. The House and Senate Republican leadership have proposed a bicameral investigations committee, but they want Republicans to control the

committee and did not consult Democrats in developing the proposal. The Democratic leadership is rightly skeptical and has proposed a truly independent commission.

As the principal oversight committee in the House, we have an obligation to conduct our own independent investigation. And if we are serious about this — as the Chairman has indicated he is — there are two steps we should take right away.

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Today's hearing is entitled *Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina.* I look forward to hearing from the distinguished witnesses the Chairman has called, but I must admit that I am perplexed by the timing of the hearing. It's going to be hard for DC, Miami, and Los Angeles to know what lessons to draw from Katrina until we fulfill our obligation to investigate the disaster in New Orleans and find out what went wrong and why.

It's too early to know what the lessons of Katrina are. But it's not too early to learn lessons from the waste, fraud, and abuse that has characterized the reconstruction in Iraq and the spending of the Department of Homeland Security. Over the last five years, the record of the Administration's handling of federal contracts has been one of persistent and costly mismanagement. Under this Administration, the value of no-bid contracts has skyrocketed. Oversight of federal contracts has been turned over to private companies with blatant conflicts of interest. And when government auditors and whistleblowers do flag abuses, their recommendations are often ignored.

In Iraq, billions have been appropriated for the reconstruction effort, yet oil and electricity production remain below prewar levels. Waste, fraud, and abuse by Halliburton and other contractors have squandered hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. And domestically, the record

is no better. The FBI spent $170 million on a "Virtual Case File" system that does not work. The Department of Homeland Security spent another $200 million on a border-monitoring system of cameras and sensors that also doesn't work. And the contract to hire federal airport screeners has been plagued by poor management and flagrant abuses.

As we prepare to pour billions into the relief and recovery effort in the Gulf Coast, we cannot allow these mistakes to be repeated. We need contracting reforms and more and better oversight. The taxpayer cannot afford another blank check.

One of the fundamental constitutional obligations of Congress is to oversee the executive branch. Despite the efforts of the Chairman — who has asked more questions than most of his colleagues — Congress has too often failed to conduct meaningful oversight. And the consequences have been perilous. When we fail to insist on accountability, we reward blunders and invite abuse.

We must not travel this road again. As the entire nation now knows, government incompetence and a failure to insist on accountability can have dire consequences.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Waxman, thank you very much.

Mr. Shays.

Mr. SHAYS. Wow. If there ever was a time for bipartisanship, I didn't hear it in the last speech. The bottom line is, if you want to be a partisan Democrat, you just focus on FEMA and what the Department of Homeland Security should have done, and if you want to be a partisan Republican, you just focus on the outrageous failure on the State and local governments. And if you want to be bipartisan, you focus on all of it.

My sense is that a bipartisan, bicameral committee—that will probably have a fairer makeup than the Contra aid funding hearing—will do its job, and Congress can do its job. This committee has been bipartisan and it has conducted investigations of this administration with vigor, and I salute the chairman for calling this hearing.

Our fellow citizens in the Gulf States endured a horrific natural disaster of unprecedented, but not unanticipated, magnitude. Hurricane Katrina destroyed so many lives. The storm also blew away overconfident assumptions about post-September 11th preparedness and laid bare lethal inadequacies in response, planning, and execution at all levels of government. We owe it to both victims and survivors to salvage the hard lessons left in its wake.

In assessing response capabilities and vulnerabilities, it is essential to begin, as we do today, at the local level. That is where disasters happen, and that is where State and Federal help will have to flow to support local first responders. That help has to get there in time and on a scale to match the crisis.

So we need to know where else in the disaster response process might the intergovernmental levees break to swamp untested plans and unproven capabilities.

Yesterday, the 9/11 Commission pointedly and appropriately reminded us of the unfunded, unfinished agenda that, if addressed, might have saved lives last month. Radio spectrum needed for interoperability communication has not been made available. A unified incident command system is not being used across all jurisdictions. We remain unprepared to protect critical infrastructure because we haven't decided what is critical. Without clear priorities, resources are apportioned based on politics and demographics, rather than risk.

Oversight of security strategies at chemical plants and nuclear facilities confirms a systemic weakness that brought tragic consequences in New Orleans. Many evacuation plans seem unrealistic and, frankly, criminally negligent given the fragile condition and constrained capacity of roads, bridges, and transportation systems, and the public health system has almost no surge capacity. In fact, as one of our colleagues wryly observed, most emergency rooms are not prepared for the walk-ins on an average Saturday night, much less a tsunami of the sick and worried well that would stream through their doors in the event of biological attack or natural pandemic.

Nature sometimes gives warnings; terrorists will not. When the crisis comes in the form of an undetected dirty bomb, a smuggled improvised nuclear device, or a sudden disease outbreak, the lessons of Hurricane Katrina could save many thousands of lives if we

heed them. A serious thorough post mortem of Katrina to glean vital lessons begins with hearings like this, and, thank you, Chairman Davis, for having this hearing. I look forward to a frank and constructive discussion.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Christopher Shays follows:]

TOM DAVIS, VIRGINIA,
CHAIRMAN

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Statement of Rep. Christopher Shays
September 15, 2005

Our fellow citizens in the Gulf States endured a horrific natural disaster of unprecedented, but not unanticipated, magnitude. Hurricane Katrina destroyed so many lives. The storm also blew away over-confident assumptions about post-9/11 preparedness and laid bare lethal inadequacies in response planning and execution at all levels of government. We owe it to both victims and survivors to salvage the hard lessons left in its wake.

In assessing response capabilities and vulnerabilities, it is essential to begin, as we do today, at the local level. That's where disasters happen and that's where state and federal help will have to flow to support local first responders. That help has to get there in time and on a scale to match the crisis.

So we need to know where else in the disaster response process might the intergovernmental levees break to swamp untested plans and unproven capabilities.

Yesterday, the 9/11 Commission pointedly, and appropriately, reminded us of the unfinished agenda that, if addressed, might have saved lives last month. Radio spectrum needed for interoperable communications has not been made available. A unified Incident Command System is not being used across all jurisdictions. We remain unprepared to protect critical infrastructure because we haven't decided what's critical. Without clear priorities, resources are apportioned based on politics and demographics rather than risk.

Oversight of security strategies at chemical plants and nuclear facilities confirms a systemic weakness that brought tragic consequences in New Orleans: Many evacuation plans seem unrealistic and criminally negligent given the fragile condition and constrained capacity of roads, bridges and urban transportation systems. And the public health system has almost no surge capacity. As one of our colleagues wryly observed, most emergency rooms are not prepared for the walk-ins on an average Saturday night, much less the tsunami of the sick and worried well that would stream through their doors in the event of biological attack or natural pandemic.

Nature sometimes gives warning. Terrorists will not. When the crisis comes in the form of an undetected dirty bomb, a smuggled improvised nuclear device, or sudden disease outbreak, the lessons of Hurricane Katrina could save many thousands of lives; if we heed them. A serious, thorough *post mortem* of Katrina to glean vital lessons begins with hearings like this, and I look forward to a frank and constructive discussion.

Mr. WAXMAN. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. SHAYS. I yield.

Mr. WAXMAN. I was taken by surprise and disappointment by your reaction to my statement. To raise questions and to make statements of facts I don't consider partisan.

Mr. SHAYS. Reclaiming my time. It all focused on the Federal Government. Totally focused on the Federal Government. And we are going to look at all three levels of government.

I yield back my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Well, I agree that we need to do that. We need to do that. And I didn't focus just on the Federal Government, but we have the major responsibility.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. We have a momentous task ahead of us, and I appreciate everybody's comments. We want to move ahead on this, if we can.

Everybody's statement will be put in the record. You will have 7 days to do that. We have time, for Members who want to say something now, but we do have a time limit. We do have some people testifying that have time limits on this, as we get close. We have former Mayor Morial of New Orleans here today. He has a very tight time slot, so I will have to make arrangements, as we get through, to accommodate them. But we will move ahead and ask people to be as brief as you can. Your complete, entire statement will be included in the record.

Mr. Sanders, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SANDERS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I would hope that it goes without saying that there should be an independent September 11th-type commission to look at the problems that surfaced at Hurricane Katrina. It is inconceivable not to support that approach.

Thomas Keane, who is in fact the formal chairman of the 9/11 Commission, this is what he said just yesterday: "This is not a terrorist attack incident, but it brings into play all of the same issues and shortcomings that we saw in September 11th. What makes you mad is that it is the same things that we saw on September 11th. Whoever is responsible for acting in these places hasn't acted. Are they going to do it now? What else has to happen for people to act?" In other words, what we are not just talking about is the tragedy of Katrina; are we prepared for a terrorist attack? What have we learned?

No. 2, when we talk about lessons learned, I would hope that we all agree that when we are talking about emergency management, when we are talking about saving lives, we want competence at the top of the ladder. You don't want somebody whose experience is based on Arabian horses; you want somebody who knows something about how to save lives in an emergency.

Third, what we also need to know is that poverty in America is a serious problem, and poverty in America is a growing problem. And maybe it didn't dawn on the White House, but somebody should know when people live day to day and have no money, you can't get into a car because you don't have a car; you can't go to a hotel because you don't have money to go to a hotel. You don't have anything. You don't have anything on any day, and you certainly don't have it in the middle of a flood. So maybe we might

want to pay attention to the fact that millions and millions of people in this country are barely surviving on a good day, and what is going to happen to them in the midst of an emergency.

And maybe out of Hurricane Katrina might come an understanding that you can't continue to ignore environmental degradation. Global warming is real. We just passed an energy bill which is still studying whether global warming is a problem, and the U.S. Government is one of the few institutions left in the world that doesn't understand that global warming is real. We are talking about the destruction of wetlands, which played a very important role in terms of the damage done due to Hurricane Katrina. We are talking about the rising of the sea level. And maybe we shouldn't be passing legislation which still does not understand that.

Hurricane Katrina was not only predictable, it was predicted. Read Scientific American. Read the Times-Picayune of New Orleans. It was there for all to see. So the question is whether we are going to be running policies on competence, on scientific basis, or whether we are going to be running agencies based on cronyism and ignoring reality?

So let me simply conclude. My friend from Connecticut indicated that this committee has dealt with some of the important issues in the last few years. I respectfully disagree. This committee has ignored many of the major problems that the American people want answered. We are supposed to be doing oversight; in many ways we haven't. I would hope that Hurricane Katrina becomes a wake-up call that there are huge issues in this country that have to be addressed. I hope this committee is serious about doing that.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Bernard Sanders follows:]

Statement of Representative Bernard Sanders
Government Reform Committee Hearing
"Hurricane Katrina: Lessons Learned"
Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this important hearing. I can hardly think of a more appropriate subject for the Government Reform Committee than the subject of what went wrong in our response to Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. I appreciate this opportunity to examine the long list of failures on the part of the federal government so that we really do learn some lessons from this awful tragedy.

There are many places to start in trying to take away some lessons from the events of the last few weeks. I think it makes sense to start when the warnings first started, and that was years ago. Of course, it's be far more than a decade that scientists and other observers have speculated about the extent of the damage a severe hurricane, hitting New Orleans at just the wrong angle, would have. But that speculation got much more specific and detailed over the last several years – to such an extent that no one with any connection to New Orleans or with any modicum of disaster preparedness expertise could honestly say that they didn't see it coming.

Scientific American reported in 2001: "New Orleans is a disaster waiting to happen. The city lies below sea level, in a bowl bordered by levees that fend off Lake Pontchartrain to the north and the Mississippi River to the south and west. And because of a damning confluence of factors, the city is sinking further, putting it at increasing flood risk after even minor storms. The low-lying Mississippi Delta, which buffers the city from the gulf, is also rapidly disappearing. A year from now another 25 to 30 square

miles of delta marsh-an area the size of Manhattan-will have vanished. An acre disappears every 24 minutes. Each loss gives a storm surge a clearer path to wash over the delta and pour into the bowl...."

The Times Picayune, New Orleans major newspaper, reported in 2002 that in the event of a severe hurricane: "Hundreds of thousands would be left homeless, and it would take months to dry out the area and begin to make it livable. But there wouldn't be much for residents to come home to. The local economy would be in ruins."

And National Geographic ran a story just last year describing the potential scenario in eerie detail: "...the storm gathered steam and drew a bead on the city. As the whirling maelstrom approached the coast, more than a million people evacuated to higher ground. Some 200,000 remained, however—the car-less, the homeless, the aged and infirm.... The storm hit ... pushing a deadly storm surge into Lake Pontchartrain. The water crept to the top of the massive berm that holds back the lake and then spilled over. A liquid brown wall washed over the brick ranch homes of Gentilly, over the clapboard houses of the Ninth Ward [and] as it reached 25 feet ... over parts of the city, people climbed onto roofs to escape it."

How could the federal government have failed the people of New Orleans and the Gulf Region so miserably in preparing for and responding to this disaster? It is not as if they didn't have a virtual road map for what would happen.

Obviously, mistakes and failures of some degree can be identified at all levels of government in this case. But this committee has jurisdiction over the federal government and we, to say the least, have our work cut out for us. In 2001, FEMA issued a report saying that a hurricane striking New Orleans was one of the three most likely disasters in the U.S., including a

terrorist attack on New York City. But between 2001 and this year, the Bush Administration cut funding for holding back the waters of Lake Pontchartrain by 44.2 percent and forced the Corps to impose a hiring freeze. That track record, in large part, is why we are here today.

That track record has been driven by a number of factors, including the refusal of the Bush Administration and the Republican leadership to honestly face up to the reality of global warming. Unless we do something to curb global warming and climate change immediately, more frequent and more severe tsunamis and hurricanes and other extreme weather are guaranteed.

Furthermore, the last few weeks have also exposed for all the world to see what we get for federal policies and practices that curtail or encourage the subversion of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, our primary tool for protecting our wetlands. We cannot have a realistic flood control and hurricane preparedness policy without our wetlands intact, yet day after day and year after year the reckless manner in which the Army Corps of Engineers administers the section 404 permit application process makes a joke of the first President Bush's stated goal of "no net loss" of wetlands. This has got to stop.

I hope to learn more today from our witnesses about why we failed so terribly in preparing for this well-predicted disaster and what the next steps are in making sure it never happens again.

But that just addresses our failure to prepare. How about our failure to respond? One of the lessons we've clearly learned is that of all agencies that could endure the appointment of a few political cronies to its top administrative positions, our federal emergency management agency is not

one of them. In a genuine national emergency, we need highly qualified experienced professionals responding to the needs of those affected. . . . .

Second, I think it is obvious to everyone observing the bureaucratic log jams that underlie the mismanagement of our response, that FEMA has no place being part of a much bigger bureaucratic agency mainly the Department of Homeland Security. I, and many of my colleagues here, voted against including FEMA in the Department of Homeland Security when it was created, and I think the events of the last few weeks, unfortunately, have vindicated our concerns. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about not only what we can do to guarantee political patronage never again corrupts this vital agency. But also, what their recommendations are for ensuring that FEMA is never again bogged down and handicapped by a kind of bureaucratic wrangling that we witnessed in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast.

Lastly, I have significant concerns about the reconstruction efforts already underway in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, too many to go into in detail right now, but I'll just mention one. It is inconceivable to me that anyone thinks it makes sense to waive the requirement that federal contractors pay people at or above the prevailing wage. Obviously many of the very people who will be hired to carry out the monumental undertaking of cleaning up and rebuilding New Orleans and the Gulf Coast were themselves victims of this catastrophe. No doubt, on top of the many other ways they have suffered, they have already taken a significant hit financially from this natural disaster. The thought that it makes sense to give Halliburton or any other contactor a pass on this very basic requirement of federal contracts, simply runs counter to the facts on the ground.

Mr. Chairman, given the magnitude of what the federal government faces in this disaster, I imagine this will only be the first of many hearings on these subjects. I look forward to beginning to find some answers today and preparing for the extensive government reform challenges we have ahead.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Turner.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I join my colleagues in expressing my deepest condolences to the families and friends of the victims of Hurricane Katrina. I also join my colleagues in admiring the many acts of bravery and selflessness of our citizens in helping those individuals who have been impacted by Katrina.

I can understand why our Democratic counterparts continue to call for an independent commission. It is because they can't even get through a congressional hearing without being partisan and us hearing from individuals that have great information and expertise for us.

The reason why we had a bipartisan independent commission in September 11th is because the issues were much more complex than just the manner of the Federal Government's response. We had questions such as who was responsible for September 11th, how did they get here; what did they do when they were here before September 11th. These are not questions you have with a hurricane. We all watched it come. We know how it got here; we know what it did.

The issues of what the Federal Government, local government and State government's response are to be is a function of government, and this committee and this Congress ought to have an ability to undertake that review, the acts of governance, without issues of such high partisanship.

There have been problems and inadequacies in the response to Hurricane Katrina, and it is important for us to understand what went wrong and what went right. In order for this process to be most effective, we must gather the facts in an unbiased, nonpartisan manner. The questions raised about our response to Hurricane Katrina are simply too important.

Mr. Chairman, as the former mayor of Dayton, OH and now chairman of this committee's Subcommittee on Federalism and the Census, I am keenly aware of the many issues raised when Federal, State, and local entities are all involved in responding to a crisis situation. Our first responders are our mayors, police, fire, and emergency personnel. State and Federal resources support initial local efforts and are ultimately engaged when the task exceeds local resources.

But let us be clear, the President of the United States is not responsible for evacuating our cities, whether it is Clinton, Bush, Carter, or Reagan. To claim otherwise is wrong. Like all Americans, I was horrified to see the pictures of low-income and African-American residents of New Orleans that were not evacuated before the storm. They were not left behind by this President, this Congress, or our American people. The fact that our disaster response was insufficient at the local, State, and Federal level is clear. Determining what we need to fix is our task.

Mr. Chairman, we need to work together to look at the issues of bureaucracy, the barriers that did not allow relief aid and the workers to do their jobs in the disaster areas. The bottom line is that these hearings are about people and families, and saving Americans' lives in a disaster.

I look forward to the testimony of each of our witnesses before us today. I am particularly interested from our witnesses and how they have addressed their plan of similar problems and what lessons they believe that we are already learning from Hurricane Katrina.

Mr. Chairman, I commend you for holding this hearing today. By working together as Members of Congress, by doing our jobs, we can plan a proactive and non-partisan role in helping to understand the response to Hurricane Katrina and learn and implement lessons from this response.

I yield back.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief. Indeed, the fact that each level of government continues to pass blame back and forth among each other shows how important it is to have a September 11th type commission appointed as fast as possible. The fact that there was no transport for poor people was almost a criminal neglect.

The inability to communicate with the first responders, the police and fire to communicate with each other, was a major problem in my city of New York at the time of the World Trade Center catastrophe. Everybody knows that there were a number of firemen who died after they had been told to evacuate. There were a number of firemen still going up the stairs to prepare to fight a fire after they were told it was necessary to evacuate, because the communication equipment was not working. The police and fire communication equipment was not in harmony. Why, after all this time, haven't we at least solved those problems? Why hasn't there been a mandate from Homeland Security to make certain that communication systems are workable?

I salute the police of the city of New Orleans and the other firemen and first responders there. But we have a built-in institutional corruption in some cities, like New York City. The first responders—who are the police and the firemen—half of them live outside of the city and would not be able to reach the city if there was a disaster requiring that they be there. First responders ought to live within 30 minutes, at least, of the assignments that they would have, and that is a built-in piece of corruption of the process that needs to be addressed.

Davis Bacon and affirmative action are two items that the President has acted rapidly on. He has quickly moved to suspend requirements of Davis Bacon for contractors operating in the reconstruction and reclamation of New Orleans and the Gulf region. He has quickly moved to suspend affirmative action. Why do we act so rapidly on those two items? Are they in the way of the process of rebuilding, the process of reclamation? I don't think so. They run counter to the needs that everybody has expressed: to have the people who live in the region be given first priority in the jobs, as they try to reconstruct their lives. They should have priority of the jobs. So don't reduce the amount the jobs pay. Davis Bacon already would tell you that in the area that salaries of workmen in the construction industry is lower than most other areas of the country.

And affirmative action certainly would not hurt anybody. It is a city of more than 60 percent minority. And why should you worry

about affirmative action to the point that you suspend it for contractors? It should be doubly reinforced in order to guaranty that priority is given to those people who want to come back and resettle.

Those are my quick comments, Mr. Chairman. I would like to hear the people.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Issa.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for holding this hearing. Certainly, it is timely. And I will ask that my entire statement be put in the record.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Without objection.

Mr. ISSA. I think, out of turn, I would like to apologize to all of our witnesses today for what you are seeing here. What you are seeing here is the reason that many of you who are involved, particularly my Los Angeles friends. You need to count on yourself, because you can't count on Congress to be there for you. There is some debate about whether or not FEMA reacted properly, whether or not it can be reformed to act in all emergencies properly.

But every year the Congress does one thing right, which is we send dollars your way specifically earmarked for the kind of disaster preparation that we are talking about here today. And if there is one lesson of Hurricane Katrina that we should all understand is you have to be your own first line of defense. And the work you do, the money that we give you and the matching money that the cities and the States need to dig deep for is very important.

The next natural disaster quite likely will not be a hurricane. It will probably not be weapons of mass destruction. It will very unlikely be an airplane flown into a building. It will most likely be an earthquake, a wildfire, or a flood of some other sort. Today we are going to hear from you about many things, but I am particularly interested in hearing about the lesson—contrary to what you heard from some of the other Members—the lessons you have already heard from Katrina. You don't need to know everything that went wrong. You need to realize that your plan may be flawed, but only you can determine the way in which your preparedness is flawed, and for what circumstances.

Hurricane Katrina is a terrible event, but it is only the sequel of an event that occurred in 1969 in New Orleans. It was foreseeable. It was something that was in the basic disaster plan for Louisiana. It wasn't something that they didn't know, that levees would breach, that it could be flooded, that pumps would shut down.

So I ask you very much today, when you are making your statements, when you are responding to questions, please look at this body and say do you want the men and women on this dais to be there running your next disaster, or do you want to be in charge of it? And if you do, help us today to understand that you are ready, or at least you know how to get ready, with the kind of assistance we are good at. And the kind of assistance we are good at is passing laws that enable you to do what you need to do and sending you appropriate money to match the money that you are spending locally. Hopefully, that will be what this hearing is about,

because as you can rightfully see, if you want us to run your next disaster, it starts when we arrive.

With that, I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Darrell E. Issa follows:]

Opening remarks by Congressman Darrell Issa to the House Committee on Government Reform for September 15, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Waxman, for holding this important hearing on local disaster preparedness and relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Thank you, also, to the witnesses for testifying before the full committee. I welcome the opportunity to discuss the important issue of disaster preparedness.

The disruption, devastation and loss of life caused by Hurricane Katrina must serve as a wake-up call to every city, county and state government in the United States. Having an effective preparedness plan and the resources available to implement such a plan are the only way to mitigate or avoid tragic circumstances like those caused by Katrina. But simply having a plan is not enough. Since September 11, the federal government has provided huge sums of money toward preparedness for devastation of infrastructure, expecting attacks carried out with weapons of mass destruction. Had these federal dollars been supplemented by more local and state money, and properly broadened to include predictable events such as hurricanes and the destruction they can inflict upon an aging system of levees, as happened in 1969 with Hurricane Camille, we would likely be dealing with considerably mitigated circumstances in New Orleans. By evaluating their emergency response plans now, our cities and counties will be able to asses their readiness and fill in gaps *before* disaster strikes.

The next large disaster to affect our country may not be a hurricane, or terrorist attack. Wildfires and earthquakes pose threats to the United States, and have the potential to inflict serious damage to infrastructure and cause loss of life. Unfortunately, the effects of a large-scale disaster are not limited to the afflicted area, but are widespread. The economy is often the most visible indicator of the dire effects of a catastrophe, whether natural or man-made. Additionally, a natural disaster can put tremendous strain on our national resources. Planning and preparedness are our best defense against large-scale disasters, and can soften the otherwise heavy blow of a catastrophe such as Hurricane Katrina.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Maloney.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you very much.

The people of New York continue to send their thoughts and prayers to the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

And, Mr. Chairman, I thank you for calling this hearing. We must ask the necessary questions and make the necessary changes, and we must not stop until this government can respond to disasters as quickly and effectively as possible.

It is clear that the response to Katrina was simply unacceptable. Some have described it as disastrous. Some people drowned, but others died because the rescue effort did not reach them in time. There were reports that people waited for 4 days for food and water. I want to know why the National Guard was not called out immediately. And I want answers to why support that others were offering from other States was turned down.

We are calling this "A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina," but we have no one here from the Federal Government. And I sincerely do not believe that it is a partisan statement to request a representative from the Federal Government. And I don't think anyone in Congress on either side of the aisle wants to interrupt in any way the important work that is taking place on the ground. But certainly former FEMA Director Michael Brown has time on his hands. He is no longer in the position. He has time to be interviewed by all the newspapers. Here is one headline: "Ex-FEMA Chief Tells of Frustration and Chaos." There is another article about him attending a spa for treatments. And I could put them in the record, but——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mrs. Maloney, that is not the committee's fault; we tried to get him here today, just for the record.

Mrs. MALONEY. Well, my point, Mr. Chairman, is we should get him, even if we have to subpoena him.

Also, the paper reports today that Daniel Craig from FEMA has resigned, as well as Patrick Rhode, the Deputy Director, is also out the door. And I think that they should be here to answer questions.

As one who represented New York City, that suffered greatly under September 11th, FEMA was wonderful. They were there that night; they stayed there every day; they responded to people; they helped people. They were important. When we reorganized the Homeland Security Committee, there was a democratic amendment to keep FEMA separate, because it is disaster recovery; it is very important. Yet, its budget was slashed and people suffered because of it.

We learned many lessons after September 11th. One of them, and the most tragic, was that our communication system did not work. The radios did not work. The Federal Government shipped down walkie-talkies the next day. I know, because I called Congressman Young. He sent them down from the military. But the same thing happened in Katrina, no communications. And there were many other problems that were the same problems that we confronted.

In the consideration of time, I would like to place in the record a document that was prepared by the New York delegation in the best sense of commitment and friendship to our colleagues that are

facing the same challenges that we faced. It is 22 recommendations, 22 descriptions of problems that we confronted in the recovery. And we feel that it is something that can help the legislators and the people on the ground in the Gulf region. And I request permission to place this in the record.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Without objection, it will go in the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

Full Comm. 2154 RHOB 10:00 a.m. 09/15/05 Submitted by Carolyn Maloney N.Y.

Lessons That Must Be Learned From the Emergency Response Following 9/11

A Guide for the Areas Affected by Hurricane Katrina

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the federal government, with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the lead, assisted New York City with disaster relief and recovery. In many respects, the disaster relief and recovery efforts were unlike anything the agency or the federal government had been tasked with before. New York will forever be thankful for the response and assistance provided by the federal government and the nation, but there were areas in the response that needed improvement.

Now, as we commemorate the fourth anniversary of the attacks, the nation and FEMA are in the middle of another disaster relief effort for which there is little precedence – Hurricane Katrina. Below is a brief description of some of the lessons that need to be learned from the efforts in New York. It is our hope that FEMA, the federal government and the Congressional Delegations from the affected areas will learn from what happened in New York so that they can better assist the people of the Gulf Coast recover.

1. The need for the appointment of a cabinet-level official whose sole responsibility is the disaster recovery effort

In the chaos following an unprecedented disaster like Hurricane Katrina, the need for leadership and open communication cannot be underestimated. It is important that local officials in the affected area have a point person within the Administration to spearhead and coordinate disaster relief operations. In New York after 9/11, the scope of the disaster was so large that other governmental agencies besides FEMA were in charge of difficult aspects of the recovery. At the same time, there was no one person in charge of pulling together all of the local, state and federal agencies to fully coordinate the response. Members of the New York Congressional Delegation repeatedly requested that the Administration appoint a cabinet-level official in charge of the relief efforts to ensure coordination. On March 7, 2002, President Bush did appoint a point person, Reuben Jeffery III, but he was not a cabinet-level official. Mr. Jeffery had very little interaction with the delegation and the much-needed coordination never materialized. The lack of coordination has had some serious long-term implications, most notably the stalled construction of the Freedom Tower and the economic revitalization of Lower Manhattan.

With Hurricane Katrina creating widespread devastation, coordination will be vital to ensure that the rescue and recovery efforts, as well as the eventual rebuilding efforts, are completed in the most efficient manner possible. Ideally, FEMA should be an independent agency whose director has cabinet-level status and who would chair a White House task force. At the very least there needs to be a person in charge of the response. This task force should be made up of all the agencies involved in the disaster relief efforts and would allow for the

coordination of creative solutions. The affected areas have already experienced too much destruction to face the additional hurdle of managing a federal response that is not fully coordinated with local efforts. This is the type of effort New York could have benefited by.

2. Ask for Regular Delegation Meetings with the President

The New York Congressional Delegation had very few direct meetings with the President following 9/11. The meetings that did take place usually occurred after decisions had been made and they were largely ceremonial announcements. This lack of communication with the President did not allow for issues regarding the disaster response and problems with FEMA to be resolved. Regular meetings with the President would have allowed issues to be raised and problems to be solved. Now, with so many questions surrounding the federal response to Hurricane Katrina and many more issues that will need to worked out in the months to come, regular meetings with the President and the affected Congressional Delegations would facilitate an open dialogue that will allow for the best response to the needs of the victims of Katrina.

3. Quickly Establish a Robust Medical Monitoring Program

When the Twin Towers collapsed, toxins and debris were released into the air. This toxic mix simmered for months as thousands worked on disaster recovery and clean-up efforts. Many normal precautions to exposure were not followed following falsely reassuring reports about air quality from the EPA and because certain safety equipment was not provided to enough of the tens of thousands of responders working on the pile. After learning of the true danger of the toxins released with the collapse of the World Trade Center and with many 9/11 responders complaining of respiratory ailments, the New York Congressional Delegation fought, over the objections of the Administration, to create a medical monitoring program. Many felt that we must care for the people who were there for us in our time of need and we wanted to do everything we could to prevent additional victims of these attacks.

One of the initiatives created is the World Trade Center Worker and Volunteer Screening Program and Medical Monitoring Program, through which a consortium of occupational medicine providers and experts across the country are medically screening and monitoring the health of over 14,000 rescue workers and volunteers. To date, the program has found that approximately 50% are still sick from 9/11 and there are real concerns that other serious illnesses are still yet to occur. Separate programs exist for New York City firefighters and for New York State employees (this program is no longer performing screenings). There is no active program that screens federal employees (the program established to screen the approximately 10,000 federal workers who assisted in the response to 9/11 shut down after 400 examinations because the program was actually finding sick people http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/10/nyregion/10responders.html). A privately funded program funds medical treatment for WTC responders because the federal government has not provided the resources. No federal resources have been provided to screen, monitor or treat affected area residents or office re-occupant employees.

With New Orleans flooded in a toxic soup and rescue workers, volunteers, area workers and residents being exposed, it would be prudent for a medical monitoring program to be

established. Currently there is no one in charge of the federal government's response to the health needs of 9/11. Any monitoring program must not be a hodgepodge of programs, with no coordination, or screening and monitoring of all affected individuals.

We must also ensure that the rescue workers have the safety equipment that they need to protect themselves from the toxins, molds and bacteria that they are working in. An emergency should not be an excuse to let established health and safety rules slide. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must also must be allowed to follow its legally mandated procedures, without interference (a report by the Inspector General's office at the EPA indicated that the White House pressured the EPA to rewrite environmental hazard warnings in the days following 9/11). Additionally, precautions must be taken to protect area residents from these elements. Proper precautions and a medical monitoring program will allow local, state and federal officials to best protect the health of all individuals exposed to these toxins.

Any established program must also provide for treatment. Unfortunately, despite repeated efforts by the New York Congressional Delegation, none of the medical monitoring programs receive federal funding to provide medical treatment to the thousands who are still sick as a result of 9/11. A significant portion of these individuals do not have health insurance (many have lost health insurance losing their job due to their ailments). The World Trade Center Medical Monitoring Program has had to rely on charitable contributions to fund treatment programs.

4. PROVIDE A ROBUST RESPONSE TO THE DISASTER'S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The EPA improperly issued assurances of air quality safety after 9/11. Medical evidence now shows widespread respiratory illnesses among 9/11 responders, residents who lived around Ground Zero, and others who worked or returned to work in Lower Manhattan soon after the disaster. In addition, the health impacts from 9/11 environmental conditions have not been properly tracked or treated in many instances, as a result of delayed implementation of federal programs and incomplete federal responses.

The EPA must be allowed to follow its legally mandated procedures, without White House interference, to comprehensively test and remediate the affected area for all hazardous substances known to be present. The EPA must also be honest with the public about the extent of the contamination and health risks. At a minimum, a disaster or emergency should not be an excuse to abandon established safety protocols.

In the clean up efforts for Hurricane Katrina, the EPA must continue to monitor all environmental hazards and accurately detail the risks to the public. Any rescue workers and/or residents should have the appropriate equipment to protect themselves against environmental hazards.

5. PROVIDE MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR SICK RESCUE WORKERS, VOLUNTEERS AND RESIDENTS

While there are thousands who are still sick as a direct result of 9/11 and medical monitoring programs exist to diagnose their ailments, the federal government does not provide any funding for treatment. This is a major problem because there are a number of rescue and

recovery workers who have lost their health care insurance after not being able to return to work after developing these ailments.

Should rescue workers, volunteers and/or residents develop illnesses as a result of Hurricane Katrina, a program should be developed to treat these illnesses.

6. PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

One of the most lasting affects of a disaster are mental health impacts. In the aftermath of 9/11, there are many individuals who continue to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, especially among rescue workers and Ground Zero volunteers. Additionally, there are great concerns about the mental health of New York City school children. Although the mental health programs established after 9/11 were the largest in FEMA's history, the general mental health response is still inadequate. Funding for Project Liberty, a program created to provide counseling, has run out of federal funds. Counseling continues with city and state funding. It is important to note that this is a counseling and not a treatment program. If a participant required actual mental health treatment, none was provided.

7. MAKE SURE LOCAL SCHOOLS RECEIVE HELP

Prior to 1994, the U.S. Department of Education was tasked with ensuring the well being of school-aged children following major disasters. This ensured that lost school days were made up and local school districts were reimbursed for expenses incurred as a result of a disaster (one example of this is the earthquake in Northridge, California). 9/11 caused the entire New York City school system to close for one week and parts of the system were shut down for a longer period. These days were never made up and the City, unlike in previous disasters, was never reimbursed for the lost instructional time. Communities affected by Hurricane Katrina will face much longer periods of lost instructional time. The U.S. Department of Education needs to be authorized to assist in disaster relief efforts to ensure that the needs of local school districts are not overlooked as other disaster relief efforts continue. Any assistance should include assistance to school districts who are now absorbing schoolchildren from evacuated areas.

8. MAKE SURE CHILDREN RECEIVE MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

The mental health of New York City schoolchildren following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 was a concern for many in the New York Congressional Delegation. We wanted to make sure that schoolchildren who were affected by these attacks had access to appropriate mental health services. Following a long battle with FEMA we were able to secure $33 million for mental health services in the New York City school system. Even after securing this funding, getting the money to the school system has faced many hurdles. Right now the State of New York and FEMA are in a dispute regarding documentation and FEMA has frozen the funds for this program.

Mental health services for school children will be necessary following Hurricane Katrina. This funding should be distributed in a timely manner and should be tracked to ensure that all deserving populations are served.

9. REQUIRE DETAILED REPORTS ON DISASTER RELIEF EXPENDITURES

When Congress approved $20 billion for New York recovery efforts, it specifically required the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to collect information from each federal agency involved in the disaster relief efforts and report to Congress quarterly on expenditures. Despite this requirement, there has never been a full accounting of exactly how or how much of the $20 billion was spent. In addition, the New York Congressional Delegation has had to fight for funding that was specifically earmarked for 9/11 relief.

With relief aid for Hurricane Katrina estimated to exceed $100 billion, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) should be given direct statutory authority to oversee the reporting of expenditures to ensure that appropriated funding reaches its intended designation in a timely manner. GAO should be authorized to have access to the expenditures of each federal agency involved in the disaster relief efforts and each agency should be required to keep records of their expenditures responding to Hurricane Katrina. After compiling this information, GAO should report to Congress on their findings on a regular basis.

10. KNOW THE TRUE VALUE OF TAX BENEFITS

When Congress authorized the $20 billion aid package to New York following 9/11, a large portion of this aid was set aside for tax benefits to revitalize Lower Manhattan. The original estimate for these tax benefits was $5.5 billion dollars, despite many members of the New York Congressional Delegation arguing that they were not worth this estimated value. Several months after the passage of these tax benefits, the White House released a new estimate that placed the value at $5 billion. A study commissioned by New York City later estimated the value of the tax benefits at $3.8 billion. After years of the New York Congressional Delegation telling the Administration that the tax benefits were not worth what was originally estimated, the President, in his FY06 budget, finally sought to convert $2 billion of these benefits to cash to pay for remaining needs related to 9/11. Unfortunately, this $2 billion conversion has yet to take place.

In reality, the actual value of the tax benefits will never be known because there was no mechanism put in place to track the use of them. The IRS, unless it is specifically tasked to do so, does not individually track tax benefits. Should Congress authorize the use of tax benefits for the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina, it would be wise to require the IRS to track the use of the benefits from the moment they are authorized. This will allow the affected areas to know the true value of the benefits.

11. ENSURE THAT WORKERS' COMPENSATION REACHES SICK AND INJURED WORKERS

Realizing that the 9/11 rescue and recovery efforts would create new workers' compensation cases, $175 million was appropriated to backstop the state's workers' compensation fund and help sick workers and volunteers who assisted in 9/11 recovery efforts. Unfortunately, these funds were authorized in a way that made them nearly impossible to use. $125 million of the $175 million was set aside for "administrative expenses" and the remaining $50 million was provided to pay actual claims. Now, since much of the money has not been spent, the President has proposed taking back this money and using it for general expenses of the

government. If this were to happen, money appropriated to care for sick 9/11 responders would be spent as part of the regular expenses of the government for FY2006. This proposal is shortsighted since health and compensation needs remain extensive among 9/11 responders, with many 9/11 workers' compensation claims still pending and with many remaining needs well documented.

As much as possible, money should be authorized and appropriated with the flexibility needed to actually use it for its intended purpose. The Congressional Delegations of the affected states should be diligent to ensure that funds appropriated for Hurricane Katrina are not taken back at a future date and spent on unrelated items, like the funds that were originally appropriated for 9/11 workers that are about to be spent in the regular budget process as part of the Labor-HHS Appropriations Bill. Funds that are appropriated to aid relief efforts related to Hurricane Katrina, including those to care for the health of rescue workers, volunteers and residents, should not be used in the future to fill a budget hole.

12. Request Federal Assistance in Paying Unemployment Benefits

The economic aftershocks of 9/11 caused job loss for approximately 100,000 people in the New York Metropolitan region. With unemployment insurance premiums based upon the number of people drawing benefits, a request was made to provide federal funding to the state's fund. This would have prevented a rise in premiums. This request was denied. It is quite imaginable that similar numbers of individuals will join the unemployment rolls and will need assistance in Katrina's aftermath. Federal assistance to alleviate the strains on the state systems would obviously help ease the burden.

13. Reinstate the Mortgage and Rental Assistance (MRA) Program

One of the most useful FEMA programs following 9/11 was its grant program for Mortgage and Rental Assistance (MRA). After working out the extensive problems with FEMA's implementation of the program, it provided important relief to many individuals. These grants provided direct payments of rent or mortgages if the applicant was experiencing difficulties in paying his or her rent or mortgage as a result of income decreases of at least 25% after the disaster. These payments lasted up to eighteen months. This provided assistance to the many workers whose jobs were lost as a result of the attacks. Unfortunately, 9/11 was the last disaster for which these programs were available. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 eliminated this program because it was considered too costly and difficult to administer. With hundreds of thousands displaced, many of whom lost their houses and/or jobs in the Gulf Coast, this program should be reinstated to prevent affected individuals from losing their houses and/or ruining their credit. It is better to stabilize the market by providing this assistance than forcing foreclosures and evictions. It is important to remember that individuals may have suffered only minor damage to their homes, but may be out of work and unable to make ends meet.

14. Better Distribute Individual and Family Grants

One valuable resource for survivors of 9/11 was Individual and Family Grants (IFG). However, there were serious concerns with its implementation. New Yorkers experienced high rejection rates, excessive documentation requirements, delays in processing, unusually low awards and general mismanagement. When some of the restrictions were relaxed, fraud and abuse were rampant.

It is anticipated that the IFGs will be widely used to assist victims of Hurricane Katrina. Because so many families and individuals have lost virtually everything, including vital documents that could provide proof of residence or employment and other critical information, FEMA must work to establish detailed guidelines for who is eligible for assistance, taking into account the severe lack of documentation most residents will face. Caseworkers involved in these claims must be given the flexibility to adequately assist residents who desperately need this assistance.

15. Remove the cap on reimbursement for lost tax revenue

An April 2005 GAO report confirmed prior reports that New York City lost between $2.5 and $2.9 billion in tax revenue as a result of 9/11, while the State lost $2.9 billion, both over the two years after the disaster. These lost taxes were caused by a range of reasons including lost personal income taxes from people who lost their jobs or lives in the disaster, lost sales taxes largely from decreases in tourism, or lost property taxes from destroyed buildings. At the same time that there was a dip in revenue, expenditures increased to pay for such expenses as the rebuilding costs and overtime for the city's first responders. In New York City, to take care of this shortfall, property taxes were dramatically increased. Many New Yorkers argued that it was unfair that they alone were left to shoulder this increased cost. After all, it was not just New York City that was attacked on 9/11 – it was the entire country.

Recognizing that many communities face increased expenditures following disasters but a lower tax base to cover the increased cost, the Community Disaster Loan Program (CDLP) was established. This program provided local communities with a loan to cover lost tax revenues following major disasters. It was used most frequently for small communities, providing as much as $200 million in loans to the U.S. Virgin Islands following Hurricanes Hugo and Marilyn. These loans were forgiven by the federal government and in essence, became grants. Due to concerns by Congress that this program was becoming too costly, a $5 million cap was added in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina there will be many small towns, cities, and states who will experience major drops in tax revenues. With New Orleans completely evacuated and unable to collect any revenues, Mayor Nagin recently announced that the City of New Orleans will not be able to make payroll for municipal employees beyond next week. Congress and the President need to rethink the formula used for the CDLP to ensure that it is more fair and adequate in meeting the needs of states and cities that endure very large disasters. We must have a mechanism to help areas that will have no mechanism to raise tax revenues, but will need the tax base to pay bills to continue municipal operations and pay for disaster-related expenses.

16. Prevent the taxation of grants for hurricane relief

In a surprise move by the IRS, approximately $1 billion in grant money provided to New York City businesses and individuals after 9/11 was considered taxable income. This decision by the IRS was estimated by the Joint Tax Committee to have caused grant recipients to send back as much as $268 million in 9/11 aid. Despite repeated requests, members of the New York delegation have been denied even the opportunity to debate this problem on the House floor and seek remedy for these businesses and individuals. It is suggested that in the authorization and appropriation of any grant money to businesses or individuals, it should be made clear that Congress does not intend for those funds to be considered taxable. No grants to help small businesses or residents in the affected areas of Hurricane Katrina should be threatened with taxation, since they are meant wholly as federal aid to help the recovery. It makes no sense to give with one hand only to take back with the other.

17. RESTORE HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM TO 15%

Following any major disaster declaration, funding is made available to states and communities to undertake mitigation measures that will make them more resistant to future disasters. The program, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), was authorized as part of the Stafford Act in 1988 and has undergone a number of changes since then. The key concept behind hazard mitigation is that if, before, during and after a disaster, additional funds are spent to make buildings and infrastructure more resistant to the forces of nature, then the chances of having to spend in the future for another round of recovery will be diminished. Examples of mitigation include installing hurricane-resistant window, door, and roof protection on hospitals and schools, buying out or elevating homes above predicted flood levels, and strengthening city halls to resist earthquake damage.

In 1993 the Stafford Act set the formula for HMGP funding at "up to 15%" of certain federal disaster assistance expenditures made by FEMA. At the time of 9/11 this flexibility allowed the rate to be set by President Bush at 5%. The President's decision not to provide the full 15% in mitigation was unprecedented and cost New York $840 million in aid that could have been used to fortify structures against future terrorist attacks. In the FY2003 budget process, the Administration proposed eliminating this important program and Congress compromised and set the cap at 7.5%. Many opportunities have been lost because of the decrease in funding.

Hazard mitigation is a wise use of federal tax dollars and state and local funds through the required 25% non-federal cost-share. As has been proven in communities across the country in the past 15 years, mitigation minimizes or eliminates the need for future expenditures for disaster recovery and repairs. The HMGP funding level should be returned to the 15% level and these dollars could be well spent in areas affected by Hurricane Katrina to prevent flooding and wind damage. For example, cities and parishes in the region have prepared pre-disaster mitigation plans that identify wind-retrofits for public buildings and projects to elevate homes to reduce vulnerability to future hurricanes. Similarly, communities in Mississippi and other areas affected by Hurricane Katrina, as well as those exposed to other disasters all across the nation, have been preparing mitigation plans in order to identify cost-effective ways to use mitigation funds.

18. INITIATE AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION

Following the attacks of 9/11 there were more questions than answers. Everyone wanted to know how the attack could have happened. Everyone wanted to know what we could do to avoid the same mistakes in the future and better protect ourselves. The independent 9/11 Commission provided many of the answers that we were seeking. Because it was an independent commission, it provided answers that no other government investigation could have. An independent commission would be the only entity that would have the ability to investigate the totality of the disaster response – from the local response to the federal response.

Because of concerns that the federal response has been inadequate in response to Hurricane Katrina, an independent investigation could be a valuable tool to improve future responses and to ensure that the current response appropriately deals with all of the needs of the people in the affected areas.

19. PROVIDE FOR CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

Following any disaster there are lessons to be learned. Congressional hearings have been held during and following disaster relief exercises to learn from the experience and make recommendations and changes to the law to prevent past mistakes from recurring. Congressional oversight of the 9/11 disaster relief efforts has been virtually non-existent. For some time the only hearing related to the economic impact of the attacks was a hearing in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee regarding the impact to the airline industry in **Minnesota**. More recently, Congressman Christopher Shays of Connecticut has held hearings related to the health response to the attacks in his Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations.

Apparently there will be some Congressional oversight of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina. However, there are real concerns that this oversight will be overly partisan and the proposed bicameral committee does not adequately balance oversight between Republican and Democratic Members of Congress.

20. GIVE NATIONAL GUARDSMEN RETIREMENT CREDIT FOR THEIR SERVICE

On September 11, 2001, and in the days and months following, members of the National Guard bravely responded at Ground Zero and in the counties declared federal disaster areas to aid in the recovery and security responsibilities. For almost a year after 9/11, these National Guard heroes helped rescue personnel during the critical first phases of the response and they endured the toxic air conditions of Ground Zero with thousands of responders. However, because these National Guardsmen were serving under state duty and not federal active duty, those days of service were not counted toward their federal military retirement credit. Other guardsmen who were activated to protect West Point were federalized and received credit toward their retirement. This disparity may only be corrected through Congressionally-passed legislation signed into law by the President.

Many of the National Guardsmen responding to the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina were and are serving under state duty and will not be federally activated so that they can act in a law enforcement capacity to help restore law and order. We need to make sure that these guardsmen get the retirement credit that New York guardsmen did not receive. For the guardsmen who also served in Iraq, this extra retirement credit will be beneficial. These

guardsmen place their lives on hold to serve our country, the least we can do is allow all of their service to count toward their retirement.

21. PROVIDE LIABILITY COVERAGE

The immediate aftermath of major disaster requires local governments and a large number of contractors and construction equipment to assist in the rescue, recovery, clean-up and rebuilding process. Despite the care taken during these efforts, people will be injured. Injuries can range from physical to psychological. There will also be property damage. Due to the complexity and risk of the clean-up in New York, the City and contractors found it virtually impossible to obtain liability insurance for the clean up. No insurer was willing to take the risk. The result was that both the contractors who performed the clean up and New York City government were exposed to multibillion dollar lawsuits. This exposure began to affect the ability of the contractors to conduct other business as they sought loans or financial backing because creditors did not want to loan money to the defendants who were so exposed in the liability suits arising out of 9/11 and its aftermath. City officials were concerned about the liability's effect on the City budget. It took the New York Congressional Delegation years to get the Administration to agree to a plan to protect contractors. For disaster recovery following Katrina, Congress should provide liability protection to assist in the rescue, recovery, clean-up and rebuilding process. This would allow for assistance to the affected areas while at the same time properly protect the workers who are assisting in the efforts.

22. PROVIDE DIRECT AID TO SMALL BUSINESSES AND LOOSEN SBA LOAN REQUIREMENTS [redacted]

Following 9/11, many small businesses were either physically destroyed or saw their business drop precipitously. In the days immediately following 9/11, the perimeter around Ground Zero cut off all areas below 14th Street to the public, and even when the area reopened, the workforce that centered around the World Trade Center no longer existed. Many Lower Manhattan businesses were inadequately insured for the events of September 11th. While the Small Business Administration (SBA) operated two loan programs to assist small businesses effected by 9/11 - the Disaster Loan program and the Supplemental Terrorist Activity Relief (STAR) program - the Disaster Loan program was the primary means by which business in designated disaster areas received financial assistance from the SBA. Unfortunately, 54 percent of the businesses that applied for loans through the Disaster Loan program did not receive any assistance. As a result, these businesses in Lower Manhattan, many of which were uninsured and unable to draw on relief from other sources, were unable to meet their financial obligations and ultimately did not reopen, leaving many unemployed and creating substantial economic challenges for the devastated area. Rebuilding the World Trade Center site and the surrounding neighborhood takes time, however, and the programs that existed to help these owners has not been sufficient to fill the gap. Four years later, many of these owners have lost their businesses, hindering the return of economic vitality in this devastated area.

Hurricane Katrina has severely affected thousands of businesses along the Gulf Coast. It is probable that the recovery and rebuilding process will take several years - if not an entire decade. Most businesses may be closed or unable to return to pre-Katrina levels of profitability for years and programs need to be developed to be responsive to these needs. The SBA should suspend payments on all SBA loans for all affected borrowers, be able to assume payments for non-SBA loans, and provide grants to these businesses to help them meet immediate emergency needs.

23. PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO NOT-FOR-PROFIT MEDICAL FACILITIES

In anticipation of mass casualties following the collapse of the World Trade Center hospitals quickly made ready hospital bed and cancelled non-emergency medical appointments. Many of these beds went unused when it was realized that there were few who survived the collapse of the towers. Additionally, hospitals who rely on a world-wide clientele for special medical procedures saw dramatic decline in appointments. Currently, FEMA is only authorized to assist public medical facilities and is not allowed to provide assistance to non-profit medical facilities. Thankfully, the Department of Health and Human Services provided $140 million in grants to the most affected hospitals, but it is estimated that New York hospital suffered a loss of approximately $340 million.

With many medical facilities sitting empty in flooded areas in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Congress must provide assistance to ensure that they can reopen and serve the communities that will need their assistance during the rebuilding process.

URLs For Documentation of Issues

1. The need for the appointment of a cabinet-level official whose sole responsibility is the disaster recovery effort

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/index.html

2. Require regular delegation meetings with the President

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/107th/20011023aid.html

3. Quickly establish a robust medical monitoring program

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/index.html#Health

4. Provide a robust response to the disaster's environmental impacts

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/index.html#Health

http://www.house.gov/nadler/wtc/cleanup.shtml

5. Provide medical treatment for sick rescue workers, volunteers and residents

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/index.html#Health

6. Provide mental health treatment

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/108th/20030624MentalHealth.html

7. Make sure local schools receive help

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/index.html#Schools

8. Make sure children receive mental health treatment

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/108th/20030318MentalHealth.html

9. Require detailed reports on disaster relief expenditures

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/chart.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/20021230chart.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/108th/2yearslater.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050621LtrOMB.htm

10. Know the true value of tax benefits

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/NYLibertyZoneGAO.pdf

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/102202_NYLZ_Report.pdf

http://www.house.gov/maloney/073002gao.pdf

11. Ensure that workers' compensation reaches sick and injured workers

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050721Responders.htm

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050623Amendment911Aid.htm

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050616InjuredWorkers.htm

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050602WithdrawlFunds.htm

12. Request federal assistance in paying unemployment benefits

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/107th/20020425fedreserve.html

13. Reinstate the Mortgage and Rental Assistance (MRA) program

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/108th/20030130MRA.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/108th/20030127statement.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/108th/20030213MRA.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/108th/20030429MRA.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/20020623mra.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/20020912MRA.html

14. Better distribute Individual and Family Grants

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/20021024IFG.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/20020913ifg.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/20021101IFG.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/20021127IFG.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/20020930IFG.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/108th/20030227IFG.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/108th/20041101FEMA.htm

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/108th/20030108MRA.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/110104DHSIGreport.pdf

15. Remove the cap on reimbursement for lost tax revenue

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/press/107th/2002100202CDL.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050420WhateverItTakes.htm

16. Prevent the taxation of grants for hurricane relief

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/Tax.html

17. Restore hazard mitigation grant program to 15%

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/chart.html

18. Initiate an independent investigation

http://www.house.gov/maloney/911caucus/index.html

19. Provide for Congressional oversight

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/108th/20030521Hearing.html

http://www.house.gov/maloney/issues/Sept11/healtheffectshearing.htm

20. Give national guardsmen retirement credit for their service

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/109th/20050526NatlGuard.htm

http://www.house.gov/maloney/press/108th/20040519NatlGuard911.htm

21. Provide liability coverage

22. Provide direct aid to small businesses and loosen SBA loan requirements

23. Provide assistance to not-for-profit medical facilities

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Chairman, if I could close by saying, in defense of Ranking Member Waxman, I do not in any way consider raising concern for taxpayers' dollars as partisan attack. The fact that he suggested that contracts be carefully reviewed, competitively bid, when applicable, and that taxpayers' money be watched, while we are helping people and trying to save their lives, I respectfully say this is not a partisan attack, this is a concern, one of the major concerns of this committee, along with getting an appropriate response to help people in disasters such as Katrina.

I yield back the balance of my time, place my comments in the record, and, as I said, request permission to place in the record the 22 recommendations from the New York delegation for disaster response.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Carolyn B. Maloney follows:]

Rep. Carolyn Maloney (NY-14)
Statement – Hearing on Lessons from Katrina
September 15, 2005

The people of New York
continue to send
our thoughts and prayers to
the victims of
Hurricane Katrina.

Mr. Chairman,
I thank you for
calling this hearing.
We must ask
the necessary questions
and make the necessary changes
and we must not stop
until this government can respond
to disasters as quickly
and effectively as possible.

It is as clear as day
that the initial response to

Katrina was simply unacceptable.
Even though we have entered
the recovery process,
there likely will be
more roadblocks to confront.

We are here to take
"A First Look at
Lessons Learned from Katrina,"
But we have no one from the
federal government here to
answer any questions

We don't want to interrupt
the important work going on right now

But certainly former FEMA director
Michael Brown has some time
on his hands these days

Mr. Chairman,
when the hurricane struck

and its devastation
became evident,
so many of the images
and news stories
we saw and read
reminded me of our
experiences four years ago,
after 9/11 –
especially as a
representative from New York.

The disasters were
different in nature,
they were different in scope,
but the enormity of their
impact has been
quite similar.

I had hoped that we would
have used the last four years
to prepare for the next disaster.

Many are correct in asking:
"We had four years to prepare
for the next disaster and this is
the best we could do?"

We certainly have done things
to better prepare ourselves,
but I am afraid that
some of those chances to improve
were missed or ignored.

About three years ago,
we sat here,
in this very room,
working on the
creation of the
Department of Homeland Security.
Knowing the successes
and failures from the
9/11 response and recovery,
I introduced an
amendment that would have

allowed the Secretary of
Homeland Security to
rise above much of the
normal red tape that
slows disaster response.
And we successfully attached
that amendment to the bill,
only to find it
stripped out when
it got to
the majority leader.
That was a
major missed opportunity.

In the four years since 9/11,
despite many successes
in the response and recovery,
New York has encountered
a number of pitfalls.
Unresolved needs remain –
needs that are felt
most immediately on

the local level.

Before us, we have
expert panels of
current and former
local officials.
They are the ones who –
after FEMA has left,
after the National Guard
has left –
will still be dealing with
any unmet needs
from a disaster.
I hope that we can
actually learn the
lessons from the 9/11 recovery –
not just pay them lip service –
so that deficiencies
are not repeated
during the Katrina recovery,
and so that our
local officials are not

perpetually stuck
looking for help after a disaster.

For that reason,
a number of my
New York colleagues and I
today are sending
to the Gulf Coast Members
a list of lessons
that need to be
learned from the
federal response to 9/11.

I hope this list
will help them
anticipate some
obstacles that could
arise so that the
recovery from Katrina
is as efficient and
thorough as possible.

And I hope that we,
here in Congress,
will not only learn lessons
from Hurricane Katrina,
but take into account
the lessons we should have
learned from 9/11
and actually make
the correct changes this time.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you,
and I look forward
to continuing to
work with you
so that the
lessons we learn
turn into positive action.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Well, I thank the gentlelady for her remarks, and I say to my friend on the FEMA amendment on the House floor, I went back and reviewed that, because I think that is an appropriate issue for Congress to review, should FEMA be separate, how does it work with Homeland Security. It wasn't a partisan amendment, it was very jurisdiction-driven. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee thought that. It came out of that separation. Part of it was jurisdiction.

I think that is wholly an appropriate deal. But that was very bipartisan on both sides, if you go back and review the voting on that. And I think that is an appropriate item for discussion as we move forward here, and that would probably be within this committee's jurisdiction. So we look forward to that.

We tried to put together a hearing today, despite opposition from some of our leaders and others, that would make some sense, that would give assurance to the American people. We have learned some things that other jurisdictions that are targets one way or the other. You know, we are working on this. There were some lessons learned. There are a lot of questions we still have to ask. We tried to find Michael Brown to get him here. And this is not the end of it. But I just appreciate everybody's participation today.

We are going to now move to Mr. Duncan.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Obviously, we all know this is not going to be the only hearing that we will have on this, and there were other meetings in which we can have other Federal officials here. I thank you for calling this hearing and I thank the witnesses for being here. While they are not from the affected areas, they are experts in being prepared for the types of problems that we found there.

I will be very brief. Let me just say everything looks easy from a distance. It is awfully easy to criticize. The response by President Bush, no President in the history of the world probably has ever devoted more time, effort, and resources to any natural disaster than the President has. No country in this world has made such a concerted effort and response as has the United States of America. No other country in the world would have responded in the way that this country has to a major natural disaster.

As horrible and tragic as these events were, a lot of good has already come out, and even more good and positive things will happen. We should be very proud of this country and the way it is responding, not only through the government, but also millions of private citizens. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been donated. There is probably not a police or fire department or sheriffs department in this country that hasn't sent people down to help out. A lot more good will happen in the days and weeks and months ahead.

Were mistakes made? Yes. Did some people do bad things? One news report I heard said one-third of the New Orleans Police Department had deserted, but two-thirds of the department were there doing heroic deeds.

Were mistakes made at the State level? Yes. One report I heard said that Governor Blanco, when the President and the mayor were ready to act, she wanted 24 more hours to make up her mind. But has she done good things? Yes.

Has the Federal response been good? Some of it people made mistakes, but most of it has been just amazing.

So I think we need to keep those things in mind.

As I said when I started, it is easy to criticize. Everything looks easy from a distance. But I will tell you this, I think we should keep in mind that no other country in this entire world could have or would have responded in the way that we have and are, and I thank you for calling this hearing.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. Kucinich.

Mr. KUCINICH. Thank you very much. I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for holding this hearing, although I will say that it might strike some people in this country—maybe those in the Gulf Coast area—as being somewhat curious that Congress is holding one of its first hearings on Hurricane Katrina by talking about Los Angeles, Miami, and D.C.

It would appear that if you want to hold a hearing about Katrina, you would be talking about Louisiana, Mississippi. This first hearing that is being held in the House of Representatives, while noteworthy and gratefully received in the context of the way things are here today in Washington, nevertheless, still will leave unresolved questions that, if they were answered today, would shed light on the predicaments some of the representatives from these communities might have.

It is curious that we say we want lessons from Katrina without actually studying Katrina here in this committee. This means that we really don't want to look at Katrina. We prefer to talk around it, which is exactly why it happened. There is a larger question here, of whether or not a certain type of philosophy of government has been at work that set the stage for the disaster.

Bernie Sanders is right when he talks about how in the world can we ignore global climate change in the context of talking about Katrina, because if we ignore it—and we have—what relevance does that have for people from Miami, from Los Angeles, and from the District of Columbia? How in the world can we ignore—as we have—issues of poverty, which inevitably confines people's mobility at a moment of disaster? What implications does that have for Miami, Los Angeles, and the District of Columbia?

Yes, it would be interesting if we had the tables turned and members of the panel had the chance to ask us questions about what we are doing about the basic elements that we already know gave rise to the tragedy. This question goes far beyond partisanship. To lay this question on a partisan basis is to do a disservice to our role as Members of Congress. This goes to the legitimacy of the Government itself. Government ends up being a huge scam if it doesn't do anything to protect people's basic right to shelter, to clothing, to food, to protection in an emergency.

This committee has a real opportunity to set the stage for real hearings which get into deep analysis of what happened and of what we can do to truly help Miami, Los Angeles, and the District of Columbia, and all the other communities who are waiting to see if the Federal Government will shift its perspective and take real responsibility for creating the circumstances that helped provide a buffer for any community hit by a disaster. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you. Let me just say to my friend that we wanted to look at everything involved with Hurricane Katrina, but we didn't want to pull people off the job. We will be sending members of this committee to New Orleans on Sunday, and the Gulf Coast and Mississippi, where we can look first-hand at this, get briefed, and, I think, be in a better position to discuss these issues.

But it was our position that we didn't want to drag people away from that, to have to come back at this point. We are looking for others. I have tried to work with your ranking member, make this as complete as we can. We felt it was important we move ahead. And we do have the former mayor of New Orleans that will be here today talking, as well. So we are not ignoring Katrina, if it appears that way.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, will we bring FEMA officials and former FEMA officials before us in the future?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That is certainly our intention.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank the gentleman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you all.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Chairman Davis. And I agree with the comments of my good friend, Mrs. Maloney of New York. FEMA did do an outstanding job in September 11th, as did Mayor Giuliani and Governor Pataki, too. So let us make sure we recognize their contributions.

And I would like to recognize two special witnesses that we have before us today, and I thank the chairman for inviting them: Mr. Tony Carper, the director of the Broward County Emergency Management Agency, and from my district, my good friend Chief Carlos Castillo, the director of Miami-Dade County's Office of Emergency Management. As director, Chief Castillo is responsible for coordinating the county's mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery for major emergencies, such as hurricanes. And south Florida, as all of us know, is no stranger to hurricanes. Chief Castillo is going to discuss the experiences of our area, as is Mr. Carper, in dealing with these natural disasters.

In 1992, 13 years ago, Hurricane Andrew brought near total devastation to communities in my area of south Florida. And the questions posed by Miami-Dade and Broward County after Andrew are similar to those being addressed by the various Gulf Coast localities in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and I think that is why my good friend, Mr. Kucinich, would agree that is why we are here to discuss the experiences of these areas, such as what can be done to lesson the damage to life, to infrastructure, to property, as well as how to incorporate the needs of a diverse population into a unified response plan. What plans are in place for evacuations? Who imposes these orders? Who carries them out? Who brings food and water to shelters? Could what happened in New Orleans happen in other cities?

Furthermore, with the international war on terror, new precautions must also be taken. And, as a result, counties and cities are now faced with the task of preparing for domestic acts of terror following a natural disaster.

The lessons learned in the 13 years after Andrew have enabled us in south Florida to implement one of the most sophisticated

emergency response plans in our Nation today, so it is important to hear from these officials.

And I visited the emergency management facilities in Miami as recently as this Monday. Hurricane Katrina adversely impacted our residents in south Florida, with hundreds suffering damage to their homes and businesses. And we are asking FEMA to provide individual assistance to those who were hurt by Katrina, but FEMA has refused to do so. Our entire Florida congressional delegation, including our two Senators, in a bipartisan manner, we have been pleading with FEMA to change its decision and provide us this individual assistance. Many lost their homes. We were fortunate to have an effective local response plan so that damage assessment and cleanup could occur immediately. And we need to learn from the mistakes of local, State, and Federal agencies that have remained in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina so that we can be better prepared for the future. And I think south Florida can provide us with some of those lessons learned after Andrew.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, again, for their invitation.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen follows:]

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House of Representatives

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Remarks for Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Committee on Government Reform
Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lesson Learned from Katrina
Thursday, September 15, 2005

Thank you Chairman Davis for holding this important hearing, and for giving me the opportunity to speak. I would like to recognize the witnesses from South Florida who will be speaking before the committee this morning, Mr. Tony Carper, the Director of the Broward County Emergency Management Agency and from my district, Chief Carlos Castillo, the Director of Miami-Dade County's Office of Emergency Management.

As director, Chief Castillo is responsible for coordinating the County's mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for major emergencies, such as hurricanes. South Florida is no stranger to hurricanes. Chief Castillo will discuss the experiences of Miami-Dade County in dealing with these natural disasters.

In 1992, Hurricane Andrew brought near-total devastation to the communities of South Florida. The questions posed by Miami-Dade County after Andrew are similar to those being addressed by the various Gulf Coast localities in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, such as what can be done to lessen the damage to infrastructure and property, as well as how to incorporate the needs of a diverse population into a unified response plan. What plans are in place for evacuations? Who imposes these orders? Who carries them out? Who brings food and water to shelters? Could what happened in New Orleans, happen in other cities?

Furthermore, with today's Global War on Terror, new precautions must also be taken. As a result, counties and cities are now faced with the task of preparing for domestic acts of terror following a natural disaster. The lessons learned in the thirteen years after Andrew have enabled Miami-Dade County to implement one of the most sophisticated emergency response plans in our nation today.

Hurricane Katrina adversely impacted the residents of Miami-Dade County, with hundreds having suffered damage to their homes and property. We are asking FEMA to provide Individual Assistance to those who were hurt by Katrina but FEMA has refused to do so. Our entire Florida Congressional Delegation, including our two Senators, have pleaded with FEMA to changes its decision and instead provide this Individual Assistance. Many lost their homes in South Florida.

We were fortunate to have an effective local response plan so that damage assessment and clean up could occur as quickly as possible. We need to learn from the mistakes the local, state, and Federal agencies have made in the aftermath of Katrina so that we can be better prepared for the future.

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Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Ms. Watson.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for being brave enough to hold this hearing, but it is premature. I look on the agenda and I find two of our finest from the city of Los Angeles. I just sent my staff down to find out if they have been in New Orleans.

As I look at the briefing memo, it says "Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina." Yet, no one is here from FEMA from Katrina. Unless the people at the table have been there, what can you tell me went wrong? Now, I know we plan in California, because we are prone, as I found out none of you have been in New Orleans, but you have sent people, and I appreciate that.

This particular hearing says the purpose of the hearing is to investigate. Now, investigate means that you go and you get the people who were involved, and you speak to them about what happened. It is to investigate the emergency plans. Now, we have been planning for decades, and the rest of the people invited come from Washington, DC, and New York. No one but Marc Morial—and he is not here—at least his chair is vacant. Is he in the audience?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. As I announced earlier, he will be joining us for a limited period of time.

Ms. WATSON. He is not here at this moment.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That is right.

Ms. WATSON. He is not here at this moment. So it should be clear to most Americans that we have serious problems with our Federal—get that, Federal—emergency response mechanisms. There is one thing we have to do, and that is to respond to a disaster that is sprung upon us without warning. But we were warned. I remember the weekend before the hurricane hit, listening to a newscaster on the Weather Channel, Channel 8, saying if it hits as a Category 5, it will change the topography of the Gulf States. That really was striking to me. I said, wow, is he harsh. And he said that he saw a sign that said "Leave or Die."

And, for the life of me, I did not know why that did not inspire the President to issue a disaster declaration on Saturday, the 27th. FEMA waited until Monday, the 29th, 5 hours after Category 3 Katrina made landfall. And they waited to even submit a plan to respond. Now, all of you can tell us what you would do in a disaster, but I want to find out why we didn't move quicker. By then we had lost our best chance to save the most lives, organizing a robust evacuation of the threatened area.

And in reality, Mr. Chairman, we did have much more than 2 days to prepare. Almost exactly 1 year before Katrina, FEMA organized an exercise wherein a fictional Hurricane Pam hit New Orleans head-on. They studied who needed to do what to save lives. They developed a plan to protect Americans. Now, this was not the massive failure of imagination of September 11th, this was a failure to carry out their own plans and responsibilities.

But the most tragic result of this disaster, Mr. Chairman, is how so many Americans were victimized, and most of them were poverty-stricken. For many poor residents of the Gulf, both inside and outside New Orleans, Katrina was the only immediate cause of

their misery. The truth is they live constantly on the edge of disaster. And when it came, they, more than others, lacked the resources to protect themselves and their communities.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Ms. WATSON. I will submit the rest of my comments.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Without objection. The gentlelady's time has expired and her testimony will be put into the record.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you. And I hope the press will get it.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Diane E. Watson follows:]

Remarks by Rep. Diane E. Watson for
"Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina"
House Government Reform Committee
September 15, 2005

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for holding this hearing today. It should be clear to most Americans that we have serious problems with our federal emergency response mechanisms. It is one thing when we have to respond to a disaster that springs upon us without warning, like an earthquake or terror attack. It is yet another when we have two or three days warning of an impending disaster, as we did in the case of Hurricane Katrina.

How is it that when the President issued the

disaster declaration on Saturday the twenty-seventh, FEMA waited until Monday the twenty-ninth—five hours after Katrina made landfall—to even submit a plan to respond? By then, we had lost our best chance to save the most lives—organizing a robust evacuation of the threatened areas.

And in reality, Mr. Chairman, we had much more than two days to prepare. Almost exactly one year before Katrina, FEMA organized an exercise wherein a fictional "Hurricane Pam" hit New Orleans head-on. They studied who needed to do what to save lives. They developed a plan to protect Americans. This

was not the "massive failure of imagination" of 9/11. This was a failure to carry out plans and responsibilities that were well understood.

But the most tragic result of this disaster, Mr. Chairman, is how so many Americans were victimized most by poverty. For many poor residents of the gulf, both inside and outside New Orleans, Katrina was only the immediate cause of their misery. The truth is that they lived constantly on the edge of disaster, and when it came, they more than others lacked the resources to protect themselves and their communities. For the most part, those who could

leave, did leave. Those who were trapped were trapped by poverty.

So Mr. Chairman, I would like to once again thank you for standing up to pressure and holding this crucial hearing. The President has repeated ad nauseam how he doesn't want to play the "blame game," that he wants to move forward. But Mr. Chairman, how are we supposed to get it right NEXT time, if we do not know what went wrong LAST time? This type of inquiry is imperative to make sure that we do not repeat the tragedy of Katrina. Thank you, and I yield back my time.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Platts.

Mr. PLATTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for holding this important hearing. I also want to thank you for taking care to structure this hearing in a way that does not disrupt the ongoing relief and recovery operations underway in the Gulf States. I commend you for working to ensure that governments at all levels—Federal, State, and local—do right by our citizens in the event of a catastrophe. Each of us who serve the public bears shared responsibility for this task.

I would like to share a quote from the founder of our nuclear Navy, Admiral Rickover. The Admiral stated, "Responsibility is a unique concept. You may share it with others, but your portion is not diminished. You may delegate it, but it is still with you." Admiral Rickover's quote should be our guiding principle in this challenging time. This hearing should be about meeting our responsibilities, and not about laying blame.

I believe that as members of this committees charged with overseeing the operation and accountability of the Federal Government, we have a responsibility to look at how all levels of government coordinate operations from a broad perspective. We have a broad perspective to engage in substantive discussions with local and State officials to ensure that the systems and plans we have put in place over the years are as effective as possible.

As we plan for disasters, we need to remember that these plans must be more than just a theoretical exercise. We can no longer afford to overlook the operational challenges that will inevitably come with the implementation of even the best laid plans.

I emphasize to our witnesses today, especially those of you who serve on the front lines in local government, now is the opportunity to offer your candid assessment of efforts to coordinate emergency planning.

Of course, there can be no responsibility without accountability. While we in the Congress stand ready to assist those who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina, we must diminish our disaster assistance funds responsibly. This money is too important to be misspent. Any dollar lost to fraud or waste is a dollar that does not make it to someone who is in need. With sound management, appropriate controls and accountability, we will have the means to continue to provide resources to those who are truly in need of our shared assistance.

As I am sure we will hear from the witnesses today, financial actions at the Federal level have a direct impact on State and local governments, whether it is in the State matching requirements under the Stafford Act or the process for reimbursing local fire and rescue departments for their work, the appropriate distribution of Federal funds is integral to ensuring that we respond effectively to incidents of national significance in emergencies.

Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing, for helping us to meet our responsibility to the American people. I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. Van Hollen.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you and Mr. Waxman for holding this hearing. I am pleased, as others have said, that this is going to be the first of many hearings, because I do think that in order to learn the lessons of Hurricane Katrina, of course, it is important to have the first-hand testimony of people and decisionmakers involved in that, and I understand that will be something the committee takes up.

I do think, given the dialog and exchange we have seen this morning, and, more importantly, given the jurisdictional problems within the Congress between different committees and rivalry over who gets to talk about what, it is essential that we do have one commission that takes an overall comprehensive look at this issue. It should be an independent, bipartisan commission. We have heard everyone on both sides of the aisle wants to find the facts. No better way to find those than a totally independent commission that has the trust and confidence of the American people.

That is not to say that this committee and other committees shouldn't pursue the areas of jurisdiction. We should; that is our responsibility.

Let me just say, with respect to the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, I was a little concerned to hear one of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle from California advise the witnesses from Los Angeles that in the future you are on your own; don't depend on the Congress, don't depend on the Federal Government for support. And I can understand, looking at Katrina, why people would reach that conclusion. I think that clearly there were mistakes on all levels of government, but clearly FEMA failed in many ways. So I can understand some reaction on the part of local and State governments, saying we are going to have to plan this totally on our own.

And I would encourage people to do everything possible they can on their own, but let us not kid ourselves. A disaster of the kind of magnitude we saw in Katrina, a disaster the magnitude of the kind of terrorist attack, a dirty bomb that you could see somewhere, is going to, in many cases, overwhelm local and State resources, and the Federal Government is going to have to be involved. So the answer here isn't you are on your own. The answer is let us make sure that we fix what happened at FEMA. Let us make sure that we fix what happened at the local and State level so that we can work together and have the Federal resources in the future the way they want to work.

Now, I represent an area that is right here in the National Capital Region, and clearly, along with my colleagues from other parts of the country, what happened in response to Hurricane Katrina has raised a new urgency about whether or not we are prepared, and I am very pleased today to have two representatives from the District of Columbia here to talk about preparedness in the District of Columbia.

I think this will also be an ongoing discussion in this committee. We have had hearings before where we had FEMA representatives and others talking about the preparedness in the National Capital Region, which clearly is on anyone's short list of a potential terrorist target. We have already seen that from September 11th. And the testimony we received in the past from both State, regional

leaders, local leaders, and Federal leaders was, yes, we are ready, or we are getting much more ready.

Well, I think, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we all need to take another look at the difference between concept and laying something out on paper, and being able to implement that under terrible conditions. So I look forward in the days ahead to doing that.

Just to flag one issue, for example, as part of the reorganization of the Department of Homeland Security, they downgraded the position of the person over at Homeland Security responsible at the Federal level for the National Capital Region. It used to report directly to the Secretary. They have now downgraded that. I don't know what the consequences of that are, but it certainly raises lots of concerns with me. And I am looking forward, not just today, but in the days ahead, to talking about the different contingencies that we have in place in the National Capital Region and other places around the country that are at risk, whether it is from a natural disaster or a terrorist type attack.

Mr. Chairman, again, I thank you for holding these hearings. I look forward to the testimony.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Van Hollen.

Ms. Foxx.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, could you come back to me after the next person?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Marchant.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Chairman, I will submit my comments in writing so we can get to the witnesses.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Clay.

Mr. CLAY. Thank you, Chairman Davis and Ranking Member Waxman, for holding today's hearing. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, it is essential that all of our cities evaluate their emergency and evacuation plans to ensure that no one is ever left behind. I welcome our witnesses and thank them for graciously providing this committee with insight into the steps they are taking to protect their citizens.

While this is an important first look at the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, it is imperative that Congress go a step further and establish an independent commission to study the Federal Government's response to this disaster.

The disaster brought by Hurricane Katrina is indisputable. The failure of government agencies and elected officials to effectively minimize the suffering and death of the victims in the Gulf Coast is indefensible.

History will record that the Katrina disaster is a turning point in this Nation's history. When the waters rose and the levees burst, the world watched as thousands of sick and elderly Americans, thousands of poor families with young children cried out for food and water. American citizens who trusted the advice of government were abandoned in an evacuated city without food and water, without plumbing, without law enforcement, without transportation, and without hope.

The pictures we saw were nothing short of unbelievable. As a Nation, we can no longer pretend that all Americans have the opportunity to share in the wealth of this great Nation. The winds of Katrina exposed the truth to all Americans and to the entire world.

The very least this body must now do is to abandon the partisanship that has stifled public policymaking for too many years. We are elected officials and our first responsibility is to represent the people, not to represent political parties. There should be no disagreement that whatever government did or did not do in response to this hurricane, we did not do our best. The mission failed, and it was not the failure of one person or the failure of one government agency or the failure of any political party, it was a collective failure. Now we must come together to do everything humanly possible to make certain that this never ever happens again.

It is my hope that today's hearing will not only shed light on the policies of major cities, but will also encourage every city and State to ensure that adequate safeguards for the future are in place to effectively respond to future large-scale catastrophes. The people of this Nation expect nothing less.

I yield back and ask that my written statement be included in the record.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Wm. Lacy Clay follows:]

STATEMENT OF WM. LACY CLAY

GOVERNMENT REFORM HEARING

"Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina."

September 14, 2005

Thank you, Chairman Davis and Ranking Member Waxman, for holding today's hearing. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, it is essential that all of our cities evaluate their emergency and evacuation plans to ensure that no one is ever left behind. I welcome our witnesses and thank them for graciously providing this Committee with insight into the steps they are taking to protect their citizens.

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enforcement, without transportation and without hope. The pictures we saw were nothing short of unbelievable. As a nation we can no longer pretend that all Americans have the opportunity to share in the wealth of this great nation. The winds of Katrina exposed the truth to all Americans and to the entire world.

The very least this body must now do is to abandon the partisanship that has stifled public policy making for too many years. We are elected officials and our first responsibility is to represent the people - not to represent political parties. There should be no disagreement that whatever government did or did not do in response to Hurricane Katrina, we did not do our best. The mission failed. And it was not the failure of one person or the failure of one government agency or the failure of any political party - it was a collective

failure. Now we must come together to do everything humanly possible to make certain that this never, ever happens again.

It is my hope that today's hearing will not only shed light on the policies of major cities but will also encourage every city and state to ensure that adequate safeguards for the future are in place to effectively respond to future large-scale catastrophes. The people of this nation expect nothing less.

I yield back, and ask that my written statement be included in the record.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Clay, thank you very much.

Let me just say we just confirmed with the White House that on Sunday there will be three committees involved—we will be the lead committee—in taking a CODEL to New Orleans. We will have three Republicans and three Democrats from this committee going. Mr. Waxman will name the three from the minority and I will name three members from the majority. I just want to announce that. I think that is an important part. We will be meeting with some of the people down there. I hope that answers the concerns of some of the Members.

Mr. Westmoreland.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank you for having this hearing and showing the leadership that we are not looking at New Orleans, we are not looking at Katrina; we are looking at some lessons learned. And I want to apologize to the witnesses for having to sit through all of these opening statements. I know that you are here to assure us that your cities and your leadership are prepared to handle either a natural disaster, a terrorist attack, or a manmade catastrophe.

You know, back to the drawing board for me means that I had always been under the impression that government works best from the bottom up, not from the top down. And I think if we look at the drawing board of how our country is set up, how our States and our local governments are set up, it is the fact that local people helping local people is the best. They know their needs the best of anybody. I think the important part looking at what happened with Katrina, is the fact that there was no leadership at the local or the State level.

I think that the main lesson learned is that our government does not function well when it is a top-down decisionmaking body that we have to do. I think that is a lesson that you didn't have to go to New Orleans to see. I mean, if you couldn't learn that from watching TV, then you may need to rethink what the lesson is, because you could just look at what was going on and compare it to what happened on September 11th, when you saw the leaders of the city walking through the streets, going to command posts, having the emergency services work like they did. And I did not see that happening in Louisiana.

And I would just like to say that I heard some other people on the other side of the aisle talk about the fact that there was nobody here from FEMA. We are not investigating—and the chairman was very wise to do that—what happened with Katrina. And the fact that the speaker and the majority leader of the Senate announced that they were going to form select committees to work jointly to have hearings so these people would only have to be subpoenaed one time and not be taken away from the important business that they are doing in the recovery and relief and the reconstruction, they would only have to come up here once and be subpoenaed once, and they could work together. And, yet, the minority party issued a statement after that, that they wouldn't even participate in those hearings. But I am glad that they are here to participate in this hearing and hear how we can better help you.

We want to make sure, if we are going to be blamed for it, I guess we need to make sure that every city is prepared to answer

the call of your citizens when we come into a time of need. So I am very anxious to hear what you say, and I am very anxious to hear how you think that we can help you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I will be brief. Let me, first of all, thank you for calling this hearing. And I appreciate all of the witnesses who have come to testify. I appreciate the representatives from the various jurisdictions who have come to share with us how well and what it is that they have been doing, and how they are prepared for natural, as well as, perhaps, even manmade disasters.

However, I find it difficult to really understand how much we are going to glean from them in relationship to what our response was to Katrina. I guess what they can tell us is what is happening at the local level, their local levels. But I think it is pretty clear that the preparation, the planning, and the initial response from FEMA was a colossal failure. And if they can help us not go down that road again, then certainly their time will be well spent.

I have been doing some research of my own, and I looked at the way that we handled the relocation of people after the 1994 earthquake in Los Angeles, and I certainly hope that we will follow some of that in terms of the utilization of HUD resources, to provide housing for people who were uprooted and dislocated.

So I look forward to hearing the witnesses as they help us to prepare in such a way that, locally, we understand what we can do and how we can do it, but also recognizing that there has to be a responsibility beyond theirs and that the overarching responsibility for these kinds of disasters really comes from the Federal Government, and that puts us back at the hands and at the feet of FEMA.

So I thank you very much and yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Foxx.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for having this meeting.

I am afraid I am going to have to associate myself with my colleague, Mr. Westmoreland, and not with the comments just made by Mr. Davis. I think that we have a major problem in our country when we look to the Federal Government to solve all of our problems. The role of the Federal Government is to provide primarily for the defense of this Nation, and I think that our role in disaster relief should be to make sure we are always going to be ready to provide for the defense of this Nation. But I agree with Representative Westmoreland, the more responsibility we give to the Federal Government, the more we are going to have problems.

It is obviously the role of the local and State units of government to take care of the people in their localities and their States, and I am interested in hearing, again, what other localities have done to be prepared for these eventualities. North Carolina gets hit by hurricanes many times every single year, and in most cases we deal with those issues at the local and State level. We ask for Federal help only after we can't deal with it. But to make it look as though the Federal Government is the first responder is a terrible

mistake, and I hope that as a result of what has happened with Katrina, which is very sad, we will realign or help to realign people's priorities. It is like asking people to think that Social Security is their only retirement benefit. By looking to the Federal Government for disaster relief, we are not looking in the right place.

So I hope you all will instruct us as to what you are doing at the local and State levels that can help us realign people's expectations, and certainly do the work better from the Federal level, but not look to the Federal level to be a first responder.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ruppersberger.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Sure. First, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and Ranking Member Waxman for your leadership in holding these hearings. I also would like to express my heart-felt sympathy for those who have lost so much in Hurricane Katrina.

The President called the overall response to Hurricane Katrina not acceptable, and I agree. The response was a local, State and Federal failure. The system absolutely failed the people of the Gulf Coast. The way the system is set up now, if the local government can't handle the situation, if the State can't handle it, that is when the Federal Government needs to step in. But that didn't happen, and we need to know why.

Thousands of residents of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida were ordered to evacuate, but when they reached the evacuationsites like the Superdome in New Orleans, they were abandoned. There was not enough food, water, and medical supplies to go around. As the flood waters rose, thousands of Americans were left behind to fend for themselves amidst chaos and lawlessness.

But our job today is to find out what went wrong and why. The victims of Hurricane Katrina deserve to know why their Federal Government, their State government, and local government failed them. It is about teamwork.

But let us get to the facts so that we can learn what went wrong and fix it. On Thursday, August 25th, Hurricane Katrina hit Florida, killing at least 11 people, and heads to the Gulf Coast.

On Saturday, August 27th, the President of the United States declared a state of emergency in the areas of Louisiana, expected to hit hard by Hurricane Katrina, now a Category 5. The move paved the way for Federal aid once the storm made landfall.

On Monday, August 29th, 2:05, the storm hit Louisiana with vengeance and headed toward Mississippi.

On Tuesday, August 30th, two levees broke in New Orleans and water flooded much of the city. Thousands climbed onto their rooftops and attempted to flee their flooded homes. The ones who could made their way to shelters like the Superdome and Convention Center in downtown New Orleans. The crowd was estimated in the tens of thousands. Flood water and medical supplies were quickly used up. Violence, chaos, and utter lawlessness took over. The images were played out on national TV. The country stood by in shock and horror.

Many of the people stranded at the Superdome and the Convention Center were people of color. Many were poor and didn't have the resources to flee the disaster. But the National Guard didn't ar-

rive until 4 days later, on Friday, September 2nd; 4 days later. It took 4 days for the Federal response to start. Americans died because their government failed them.

These victims—not refugees—were forced to endure horrific circumstances, and that is absolutely unacceptable. We need to find out what went wrong and fix the system to better respond the next time for all Americans.

Now, we also need to stop blaming, stop all of the spinning, and get down to what we are elected to do, and that is to fix the problem and protect the American people.

First, FEMA needs to be taken out of the Department of Homeland Security and restored to an independent agency. It must be headed by an emergency management professional with direct line to the President. FEMA needs the independence to address disasters without navigating through layers of bureaucracy. It is about leadership.

As part of this committee, I believe we must investigate where the breakdown between the local, State, and Federal Government happened, and prevent it from happening again. We have brought this broad array of local and State experts together today to help to bring some insight into what went so terribly wrong, and this is just the start. I believe it is our responsibility as members of this committee and citizens of the country to proceed forward and totally investigate the matter.

We must send a clear message to our country that whether you are Black or White, rich or poor, Republican or Democrat, your government is here to protect you. We must do this quickly and keep our country and our citizens safe. We cannot control when the next disaster will come, but we can control how we prepare for it.

And as far as the issue of hearings, it is extremely important that we have an independent commission like the 9/11 Commission. When we were attacked, we came together as a country, a good commission. We have precedent. We need to do that. We need to have credibility with respect to the facts that we get and the decisions that we make.

Mr. Chairman, again, I thank you for your courage and leadership, and you, Mr. Waxman, for coming together with this hearing, and this is just a start.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Ruppersberger.

Mr. Shaw, you want to make an introduction at this point, and then we will still have a couple more statements, but we are almost to the panel.

Mr. SHAW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Waxman, members of the committee. I very much appreciate your allowing me to introduce Mr. Tony Carper of Broward County, FL. Tony serves as Broward County's Emergency Operation Coordinator, a position he has served in since his appointment in 1993.

Prior to arriving in Broward, Tony served the residents of Brevard County, which is just north of Broward County, for 13 years. Currently, he is president of Governor Jeb Bush's Hurricane Conference and on the Board of Directors of the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association.

As a resident of Broward County and a member of the Broward Congressional delegation for the past 24 years, I am extremely

proud of the preparation and level of professionalism that Tony has demonstrated, as well as the wonderful county employees of the EOC. Tony has led our county through 14 hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and wildfires since 1995. Tony has a balanced and organized approach to each disaster, and has worked extensively with his local and State counterparts to ensure necessary resources are in place following a disaster.

In south Florida, and Broward particularly, we take great pride in the level of public preparedness prior to and directly following a named hurricane. We all suffered through the tragedy of Hurricane Andrew in 1992. Elected officials at the local, State, and Federal levels and the entire community rose to the occasion and committed themselves to achieve preparedness for future disaster.

Under Tony's leadership, as a hurricane approaches Broward County, the Emergency Operation Center is fully operational at least 24 hours prior to landfall. As the storm makes landfall, Broward County officials use the county EOC as an emergency command center where public utilities and law enforcement are coordinated among other needs. Broward County has the means to get the necessary supplies to those in need in a timely manner. This success comes from direct communication and work with the Broward Sheriffs Office and the Florida National Guard.

It has been made clear to us over the last several weeks that hurricane preparedness is critical. In Florida, whether it is Governor Bush or Broward County officials, residents of Broward County are informed of the impact of the storm and the need to evacuate from low lying areas near the coast and in and around the intracoastal waterways. Mandatory evacuations are handled in a prompt time period, allowing the maximum amount needed to move hundreds of thousands of residents from the coast, many being elderly. These quick decisions are all outlined in the county's Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan.

Mr. Chairman, as the committee hears from our Nation's first responders and the emergency coordinators, I trust you will take firm action to ensure that what we witnessed in the Gulf region can be avoided. I thank the committee for the opportunity that I have to introduce Mr. Carper, and I would like to say that I think Broward County's plan, as well as, I am sure, some other plans that you will hear from today, can be used as a template. We must learn from this tragedy.

And I applaud you for having this hearing and I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Hon. E. Clay Shaw follows:]

Remarks by Hon. E. Clay Shaw, Jr.
House Government Reform Committee
Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Waxman, members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to introduce Mr. Tony Carper of Broward County, Florida. Tony serves as Broward County's Emergency Operations Coordinator, a position he has served in since his appointment in 1993. Prior to arriving in Broward, Tony served the residents of Brevard County for 13 years. Currently, Tony is the President of the Governor Jeb Bush's Hurricane Conference and on the Board of Directors of the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association.

As a resident of Broward County, and a member of the Broward Congressional delegation for the past 25 years, I am extremely proud of the preparation and level of professionalism Tony has demonstrated, as well as the wonderful county employees of the EOC. Tony has led our county through 14 hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and wildfires since 1995. Tony has a balanced and organized approach to each disaster, and has worked extensively with his local and state counterparts to ensure the necessary resources are in place following a disaster.

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Mr. Chairman, as the committee hears from our nation's first responders and emergency coordinators, I trust you will take firm action to ensure what we witnessed in the Gulf region can be avoided. I thank the committee for the opportunity to introduce Broward County's Emergency Coordinator, Mr. Tony Carper.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Lynch.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In order to be as brief as possible, I am just going to associate myself with the remarks of Mr. Ruppersberger.

I would like to say, however, that the title of this hearing is "Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina." First of all, I appreciate all of the witnesses here, and I know several folks have come in from Los Angeles and we have some folks from Washington. But I think that at some point in these hearings—I hope there will be more—we should probably, I think, talk to some folks who were in charge in Louisiana and Alabama and Mississippi.

I heard the comments of Mr. Westmoreland, my dear friend and colleague, that we all got to watch TV and see what was going on, but I think that we need to learn at a deeper level than just sitting on our couches and watching people suffer. And I have to admit that I did not recall that the hurricane hit California. I do not recall that the hurricane hit Washington, DC. I do not recall that the hurricane hit the Heritage Foundation.

And that is where the great majority of these witnesses are from. And I don't see anybody who was actually in charge on the ground in either Louisiana, Mississippi, or Alabama.

So I think if we are really honestly looking to get to the bottom of this and figure out what we can do to straighten out the problems, we ought to talk to some of the officials who were actually on the ground and had to deal with the disaster that occurred there. I think we owe that to the American people.

And I yield back. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Porter.

Mr. PORTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to share a totally different perspective, possibly, this morning. I know that there are many Members here that are rushing to judgment and there are many Members here with an open mind. I do believe that we are all here trying to do the right thing.

But I had a call on Sunday morning, prior to the storm hitting, from a friend who had family in Mississippi, in Pass Christian and in Bay St. Louis, and a little community called Picayune. It was Sunday morning, probably 10 a.m., and they anticipated that their family that were living there were going to be in harm's way.

So I decided to load up my little Suburban with a couple generators, some water, some things that I thought may be a challenge to pick up in Mississippi or Louisiana, drove cross-country, called my office early Sunday morning and ask them to overnight a satellite phone to me so it would be in Dallas by the time I got there.

Well, to make a long story short, I was called by a friend that anticipated help, and I got to the beach in Mississippi, I believe, early Wednesday morning. Had picked up a U-Haul in Louisiana on the way and loaded it with water from our friends at Wal-Mart. I am troubled. Having been a mayor, a city councilman for almost 10 years of a small community, but also a State senator for 8, and now in Congress for two terms, I am troubled that I was the first responder on the beach 2,500 miles away.

And I am not telling this story because of what I was able to do because a friend asked me. I think you probably would all do the same if a friend called you up and said I think I am going to have a problem. So it is nothing to do with my driving there, other than I don't really understand how I can drive in my little Suburban, with a U-Haul trailer 2,500 miles, and be the first person on the beach, and to be the first human that was seen on that beach, other than neighbors that were still alive and still well.

And I am the first one to agree that we have very serious problems and the system is broken. And I know that we have members of this committee that have served as a mayor. I know Mr. Turner was a mayor of a community, Mr. Ruppersberger also represented local government. We have a lot of folks on this committee.

But my perspective is that I think the most frightening part of what we are seeing today is that local, State, and Federal Government think and thought they were prepared. And I know we have a lot of experts here today that are going to talk about their experiences, but I question whether we have communications in this country where one city can talk to another city, or one firefighter can talk to a policeman, or a policeman can talk to a highway patrolman, or where a highway patrolman can talk to the National Guard. Some basic principles I don't believe are in place today.

I am sure we have experts here that will talk about their communities, but is there any local agreements between Washington, DC, and Baltimore if there is a problem? I don't know. I expect that we are going to have that opportunity.

But there are a lot of things happening beyond my fear that local, State, and Federal Government think they are prepared, and that is the hurricane and political destruction that is happening in the city. Literally, I am on the beach—and my friends, by the way, one home was totally gone, one home was under 6 feet of water, and another home was OK in Picayune.

I am listening to my satellite radio to the news, and I hear politicians in Washington already blaming, while we are still rescuing people in New Orleans. And I am looking around thinking why isn't there a bottle of water here, a semi load of water coming from another city.

Why isn't another community, through the National League of Cities or the National League of Counties or whoever, why are we not seeing a semi load of water? I drove 2,500 miles. I had a friend bring in 400 gallons of gas from California. He flew in to Arkansas, rented a truck. This was Saturday. He showed up with gasoline. He is from California.

Now, again, I have served local government. I appreciate and respect that we have professionals out there that really believe that they are doing the right thing and that they have a system in place. But as this city is having its own hurricane of trying to get a one-upmanship on who is going to take the high road, it is going to be up to you, local government, to cut through all this.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. PORTER. Because we have our own destruction happening in Washington that is not productive.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. PORTER. So I thank you for being here. There are a lot of things we can do together if we do it together. So I thank you very much.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you.

Mr. Gutknecht. Anyone else? Mr. Souder.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of brief points. First, I would like to build on Mr. Porter's point. I have had the opportunity, because we have had so many long statements, to basically read all of your opening statements, and one of my concerns is not that the paper plans aren't there.

I am a senior member of Homeland Security, I chair the Narcotics Committee. I have been to Los Angeles and Miami in with your port facilities, in with your police people. It is a lot of the same old, same old. I hope we hear, at least in the question part, what did you learn, what are the differences? Because most of you are still saying we have interoperability problems with our radios, that is a goal; we hope we have plans to evacuate low income.

The massiveness of this stunned us all, and it should be forcing you to reevaluate everything we have for major catastrophic type of plans. Clearly, New Orleans did not have a command and control center. And while there are multiple command and control centers, many of them are fairly archaic in our different cities, and they don't interact between the different centers. And are those protected if there is a catastrophic event? Is there a way to have it mobile enough for a backup system? I hope we will hear some of those kinds of questions today. And as we build it, because without command and control, this simply isn't going to work.

Another question is I didn't see anything in my cursory examination of all of the testimony today, but clearly one of the things that is happening is the volunteers and charitable organizations have to be an integral part—not just an add-on, an integral part—of rescue efforts and assistance efforts. And we have had chaos up and down this region of people being turned away, of EMS people moving from four different places and only dealing with one person. Because the American people will do this, and clearly if we had multiple disasters simultaneously, we don't have the tax dollars to do it. This is going to strain our budget. We have to have the charitable and volunteer organizations as an integral part.

I think another key, fundamental question is—and it has been raised several times. The New York Times, I believe, reported that the Governor turned down the Department of Defense taking over operations. At what catastrophic level do you say, look, our police system is wiped out, our systems are out, there has to be a command and control system because we don't have it? And that is a politically loaded question, but when we, as the Federal Government, already put $60 billion in down there, and looking at another $200 billion, at some point we are responsible for those tax dollars.

And the question is when does command and control shift in authority. Those are very difficult questions, but I think some that we are hoping to hear, those of you who are now some of our most critical and at-risk areas of the country, to say what are you learning from this; how can we prepare when it is this level of catastrophe that is the biggest we have ever seen, similar to that, and then kind of mid-level, and then kind of the day-to-day more likely tar-

geted neighborhood catastrophe or part of a downtown area type of catastrophe, which most of our plans are designed for.

I yield back.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Cummings, last but not least. Thank you.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for calling this critically important hearing to assess the local emergency response plans to natural disasters at major U.S. cities.

While today's hearing presents us with the opportunity to look at the road ahead let us not lose sight of the failure of all—all—levels of government staring at us in the rearview mirror.

However, one need not be an expert to understand that national disasters of the scope and magnitude of Hurricane Katrina demand national leadership and resources that only the Federal Government can provide. Although we are reading from the right book with today's hearing, our focus should first be on a different page, one that directly asks the question what went wrong and why it went wrong in response to the Federal Government in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

In the uncertain times immediately following a disaster, our citizens expect to find comfort in the certainty that their government will respond rapidly, decisively, and ably to meet their essential needs for food, water, shelter, and security. Regrettably, the American people's faith in that certainty has been shaken.

The inattention, inaction, and ineptitude that characterized the Federal response to Hurricane Katrina gave way to disbelief as the images of American citizens—not refugees—struggling for their very survival filled our homes and our hearts with the same shame and grief. Americans from all walks of life are asking why so many of their fellow citizens were abandoned for 4 days without food or water; why the dead lay disregarded under the sweltering sun for days without the dignity of a proper burial; and why so many needlessly died and suffered because vital relief was slow to arrive.

Mr. Chairman, the American people are also asking what if Katrina had been an act of terrorism. Four years after the attacks of September 11th, Hurricane Katrina demonstrated with abundant clarity that there is much work yet to be done to improve our national preparedness for both threats of human design and acts of nature.

In clear and plain terms, the vulnerability that confronts all levels of government today is in part the result of poor choices that were made within the administration and the Congress. These policy choices not only hinder Federal response efforts, but they can undermine State and local plans to protect their communities. Let us keep in mind that while we do not have control over nature, we do have control over the policy choices that determine our capacity to lessen the impact of nature's mighty blows.

For instance, the inclusion of FEMA within the Department of Homeland Security, coupled with funding cuts, seems to have weakened FEMA's ability to manage Federal emergency response and assist State and local governments in their disaster preparation and recovery efforts. I am not less troubled by the reduction

of Federal funding for certain public works projects that are critical to safeguarding State and local communities.

For example, and as I close, we must determine the extent to which an approximate 40 percent funding decrease between 2001 through 2005 for maintenance and repair projects for the New Orleans levy system contributed to the severity of the flooding. So too must we ask are we shortchanging other high-risk communities?

I am also concerned with the administration's continued application of a flawed contracting strategy. As it now stands, the $62 billion of taxpayer money that Congress has dedicated for emergency recovery efforts to Katrina is veering dangerously close to being subject to waste, fraud, and abuse.

Further, it seems contrary to common sense that while many of the displaced look for work, our contracting efforts have not sufficiently utilized the potential to employ them. The lack of substantive involvement of small businesses of all types, including those owned by women and people of color, in the recovery effort seems just as troublesome.

In the end, let us collectively seize the opportunity to not only right the wrongs of emergency mismanagement that were so painfully illustrated during and after Hurricane Katrina, but the wrong of poverty that forces upwards of 37 million Americans to routinely weather the storms of failing schools, poor health care, and limited opportunities.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Elijah E. Cummings follows:]

Opening Statement of

Representative Elijah E. Cummings, D-Maryland

Hearing Entitled: "Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned From Katrina"

Committee on Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
109th Congress

September 15, 2005

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While today's hearing presents us with the opportunity to look at the road ahead, let us not lose sight of the failure of all levels of government staring at us in the rear view mirror. However, one need not be an expert to understand that national disasters of the scope and magnitude of Hurricane Katrina primarily demand national leadership and resources that only the federal government can provide.

Although we are reading from the right book with today's hearing our focus should first be on a different page, one that directly asks the question what went wrong and why it went wrong in the response of the federal government in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

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I am no less troubled by the reduction of federal funding for certain public works projects that are critical to safeguarding state and local communities. For example, we must determine the extent to which an approximate 40% funding decrease for the Corps of Engineers between 2001 through 2005 for maintenance and repair projects for the New Orleans levee system contributed to the severity of the flooding. So too must we ask, are we shortchanging other high risk communities?

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In the end, let us collectively seize this opportunity to not only right the wrongs of emergency mismanagement that were so painfully illustrated during and after Hurricane Katrina, but the wrong of poverty that forces upwards of 37 million Americans to routinely weather the storms of failings schools, poor health care, and limited opportunities.

I look forward to the testimony of today's witnesses and yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Any other Members wish to make statements?

[No response.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. If not, let me thank our panel for their perseverance through this. We are delighted to have you today. Our panel will consist of the Honorable Mark Morial, who is going to come and has a short timeframe. He is not here right now. He is the former mayor of New Orleans and the chief executive officer and president of the National Urban League.

We have Constance Perett, who is the administrator, Office of Emergency Management, the county of Los Angeles; Mr. Ellis Stanley, the manager of Emergency Preparedness Department, city of Los Angeles; Mr. Robert Bobb, the deputy mayor and the city administrator for the District of Columbia; Mr. David Robertson, the executive director from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; Mr. Tony Carper, Jr., the director of the Broward Emergency Management Agency, who has been introduced by Mr. Shaw; and Chief Carlos Castillo, the director of Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management.

It is our policy to swear you in before your testimony, so if you would just rise and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much for being with us. And although a lot of Members have spoken and left, we still have a lot of Members here to hear what you have to say. We think it is important.

I am going to start with you, Ms. Perett, and move straight on down. When Mr. Morial comes, I will swear him in immediately and go to his testimony. We may also have votes in the middle of this, but so far we have not.

Please proceed. Thank you.

STATEMENTS OF CONSTANCE PERETT, ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CA; ELLIS STANLEY, GENERAL MANAGER, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DEPARTMENT, CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CA; ROBERT C. BOBB, CITY ADMINISTRATOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; DAVID J. ROBERTSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS; TONY CARPER, JR., DIRECTOR, BROWARD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, BROWARD COUNTY, FL; CHIEF CARLOS CASTILLO, DIRECTOR, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FL; AND MARC MORIAL, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE, INC., FORMER MAYOR OF NEW ORLEANS, LA

STATEMENT OF CONSTANCE PERETT

Ms. PERETT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and honorable committee members. On behalf of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and our chair, Supervisor Gloria Melina, I want to thank you for allowing me to come and talk to you about some issues that are of great concern to all of us.

You have my statement, so I am not going to belabor our preparedness. I am going to touch on a couple of highlights and then I am going to talk about some recommendations.

Los Angeles County is no stranger to disasters. I lost count a long time ago. I have been an emergency manager for 21 years, and we have had so many disasters that I really cannot remember them all. During the 1990's we had 10 federally declared disasters in a 10-year period. We call it the decade of disasters.

We have been very aggressive in preparing for disasters because we must. We are large, we are vast, we have 10 million people, very diverse. We have 88 cities, independent cities, and 137 named unincorporated areas in our county, and it is very complex. Multiple languages spoken, and we really have to have our act together.

We do this under the Standardized Emergency Management System, which was chartered into law in 1995. It is an excellent system. It is based on incident command. We swear by it. We are able to coordinate very effectively. You see Ellis Stanley sitting beside me here. We work on a daily basis together with the city of Los Angeles, with our other 88 cities, and with our State partners.

I want to emphasize how critical coordination is. We have public education programs; we have a state-of-the-art emergency operation center, and I don't see how any jurisdiction can operate without a state-of-the-art emergency operation center. I don't know how they can do their job.

Let me move to some recommendations, if I may. They are not in any particular order, I just wrote them down as I listened to you and I thought about things.

First of all, I believe that more resources absolutely need to be directed to the local level. You hear the expression that all disasters are local. Well, they are; they start in somebody's backyard. So local government needs the resources to be prepared. Many jurisdictions have one person doing emergency management, and maybe they have two or three other collateral jobs. You cannot get this job done if you are not devoting the resources to it.

You need to emphasize mutual aid, because when you see a large-scale event, nobody is an island; they can't do this alone. Mutual aid needs to be strengthened throughout the United States.

You need to also have strong State partners. We have that in California and we believe that it is critical across the Nation.

I would like to see more focus on funding for the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program. That is the lifeblood of emergency managers. And just to say, first responders are critical, but first responders do not do the global overview of coordination and preparedness for disasters. You need to put funding into that if you want to see a coordinated, well planned and organized response.

I would like to talk about FEMA and say to you that I believe with all of my heart that FEMA needs to be a standalone organization, it needs to be reporting to the President, and it needs to be cabinet level status. This is not a time for going through layers of bureaucracy, when you have to move fast and be nimble; it is too important. It is way too important for it to be buried in a large organization.

I believe that FEMA needs some well defined protocols for how it is going to provide resources at the State and local level. I believe that, again, is an issue of coordination in advance and understanding when resource is coming, how do you receive them, how do you put them to use. It does no good to have the finest resources in the world if you don't know how to put them on the ground and people understand how to use them.

I believe from a local level you need to engage your community-based and faith-based organizations. It is critical. They are actually the first on the street helping the public when something goes wrong. They are there handing out blankets and food and water, and they should be an integral part of any jurisdiction's preparedness plans. And I believe they should be getting some Federal support for what they do. They rely on donations, and when their regular stock of donations is depleted, where are they going to get the funds?

It looks like I am running out of time.

Let me also put emphasis on public education and the understanding that people have to know how to take care of themselves for a period of time, because government cannot do all these things for them.

And I believe I am out of time, and I thank you very much for your attention.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Perett follows:]

PREPARED REMARKS FOR THE
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

CONSTANCE PERETT, ADMINISTRATOR
LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

September 15, 2005

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Committee Members:

Thank you for giving me the privilege of presenting testimony on behalf of the County of Los Angeles. My name is Constance Perett, and I am the Administrator of the County Office of Emergency Management. We sincerely appreciate your desire to examine preparedness levels in large jurisdictions, and we welcome this opportunity to present information on the County's plans and capabilities.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Los Angeles County has the largest population and is the most complex county in the United States. Its area encompasses over 4,000 square miles, including mountains, deserts and coastline. Our county has 88 independent cities; 81 school districts; 13 community college districts; numerous special districts; 137 named unincorporated areas; and ten million ethnically diverse people. During the 1990s, the County had the most federally-declared disasters of any jurisdiction in the United States.

Because of the many natural and manmade hazards we face, the County has had an aggressive emergency preparedness program for many years.

STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The County uses the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) to coordinate and respond to disasters. SEMS is based on the Incident Command System which was developed in California by Firescope in the early 1970s. SEMS provides common functional descriptions, common terminology, and a common organizational structure for the coordination of damage information and resource requests. Under SEMS, the County, also known as the Operational Area Coordinator, serves as the intermediate level of government that coordinates and communicates response needs between the cities within its geographic boundaries and the state. As the OA Coordinator, we also coordinate pre-event planning, training, exercises, and much more with our cities, community-based organizations, utilities, state agencies, and other OA partners. SEMS is an effective system that has served us well for the past ten years. Much of the new National Incident Management System (NIMS) is based on SEMS.

COUNTY OPERATIONAL AREA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

Around 1989, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the development and construction of a state-of-the-art County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC). We broke ground on the facility in 1992, and took occupancy in 1995. The CEOC is base-isolated to withstand an 8.3 earthquake. It has multiple redundant communications systems, fuel, water, emergency generators, audio/video capabilities, and a host of other technical capabilities. The CEOC is designed around the Incident Command System with planning rooms for Operations; Plans and Intel; Logistics; and Finance, Administration, and Recovery.

The CEOC is equipped with an Emergency Management Information System that allows us to communicate directly with all 88 cities plus the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES); County departments; Red Cross chapters; school districts; and other agencies using internet web-based technology. We are able to get rapid reconnaissance reports from our cities, followed by more detailed damage information and resource requests. This ability to communicate with our cities allows us to quickly identify areas of damage and to receive resource requests so that County and mutual aid resources can be sent to the impacted areas.

PLANNING AND EXERCISES

On a day-to-day basis, we coordinate planning and exercises with our 88 cities by working with our Disaster Management Area Coordinators (DMACs). The County is divided into eight Disaster Management Areas and each DMAC works with a consortium of cities within their area to ensure that plans are coordinated with their cities and with the County OA. Our office also coordinates major countywide exercises every year. For the past several years we have concentrated on terrorist-driven scenarios. All 88 cities are invited to participate in each year's exercise program and, over the years, we have engaged almost all our cities to one extent or another in EOC activations, tabletop exercises, and full-scale events. Our program this year includes 36 tabletop exercises and will culminate in three CEOC functional exercises and a full-scale event.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

The County has 36 departments that provide a vast array of services to our county's 10 million residents. Many of our departments provide countywide services such as health and public health, public social services, coroner, and mental health. In addition, the County Fire Department is responsible for providing fire protection to approximately 57 of our cities as well as the one million people in our unincorporated areas.

Our Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement protection to approximately 48 cities plus our unincorporated areas. In addition, our Sheriff and Fire departments are the Mutual Aid Regional Coordinators for their respective disciplines. The County operates hospitals, health clinics, libraries, and numerous other public services, all of which must be prepared to provide essential services following emergencies and disasters.

All County departments are required to have department emergency plans that describe how they will continue their non-deferrable services and emergency missions during disasters. All departments must also have building emergency plans to address the life/safety of occupants and visitors to County buildings.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Public education is an essential component of any emergency preparedness program. The County's award-winning "Emergency Survival Program" was developed in 1989 and provides valuable preparedness information for a wide variety of hazards, including terrorism. It is available on our OA website at www.lacoa.org and our ESP website at www.espfocus.org. Jurisdictions, disciplines, private and non-profit agencies are all encouraged to put their own logos on our materials. Our goal is to reach as many people as possible with preparedness information. We are best able to do that by making our materials accessible to everyone.

COORDINATION IS CRITICAL

If I were to pick one aspect of emergency preparedness that was the most critical it would be the coordination of plans before disasters and the coordination of response and recovery activities after disasters. The County works very closely with the City of Los Angeles on a regular basis, and we exchange staff in our respective EOCs during activations. We also exchange staff with our State OES partners. I firmly believe that by planning, training, and exercising together before disasters occur, we are far more capable of an effective, coordinated response during disasters.

NIMS implementation is an important part of our nation's plan to coordinate disaster response operations. I am pleased to inform you that the County of Los Angeles has developed a NIMS Implementation Plan and is moving swiftly to integrate NIMS and SEMS for a successful local, state, federal interface.

In conclusion

Although we have a strong emergency management program in our county, there is still work to be done. That is why the County has adopted the credo, "Los Angeles County, Prepared Today. . .. Even More Prepared Tomorrow". The County advocates for strong cities, a strong County OA, a strong State emergency management organization, and a strong FEMA. I once saw a quote that I liked so much it is now hanging in my office. It says "None of us is as competent, creative, or resourceful as all of us".

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to present information about the County of Los Angeles' emergency preparedness programs.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

1. **What states of emergency have been declared in your jurisdiction during the last several years?**

   During the 1990s, Los Angeles County had ten federally-declared disasters (Upland/Claremont Earthquake; civil unrest; major firestorms; the Northridge Earthquake; the Sierra Madre Earthquake; several years of flooding, etc.). We also had a number of locally-proclaimed emergencies. Since 2000, we have had a number of fires including the Grand Prix/Padua Firestorm; windstorms; a freak 100-year hailstorm; and torrential rains in January and February of 2005, resulting in flooding, and landslides.

2. **Who takes immediate operational command over response efforts to emergencies in your jurisdiction?**

   The County of Los Angeles is the Operational Area Coordinator for the geographic area of the county (county unincorporated area and 88 independent cities). By ordinance, the Sheriff is the Director of Emergency Operations during the response phase of the disaster.

3. **How do you escalate a state of emergency from local to state to the federal government?**

   The County bases its decision to proclaim a local emergency on prevailing conditions, such as scope of damage and resource requests. Based on the nature and scope of the event, the County makes a decision regarding whether to request a gubernatorial proclamation of emergency and a federal disaster declaration. We make such assessments rapidly and are able to quickly proclaim local emergencies, and request state and federal proclamations and declarations.

   Is this escalation criteria defined in your plan?

   Yes. We have a robust damage assessment system and protocol, coupled with internal Office of Emergency Management protocols for rapidly proclaiming emergencies. Furthermore, we work very closely with our State partners throughout the proclamation process.

4. **Does your plan include details on evacuation procedures? If so, what facilities, transportation, health services and recovery resources are immediately available to your citizens?**

The Los Angeles County Operational Area Emergency Response Plan tasks law enforcement with lead responsibility for movement/evacuations. Our Sheriff's Department and County Fire Department have a jointly-developed Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that includes detail protocols for coordinated evacuations. The EOP includes operational concepts, authorities, evacuation policies, command structure, alerting and warning, transportation resources, incident support agencies, and a host of other resources to address evacuation operations.

5. **Do you have communications interoperability among all departments and first responders in your jurisdiction?**

   County Fire and Sheriff have the ability to "cross talk" their communications via a link at the Sheriff's Communications Center. There are pre-designated mutual aid frequencies for fire and law resources throughout the county. Currently, a "big picture" communications study is underway to link all first response agencies through the Operational Area (County). This study will be completed by the end of the year. The OA is also developing a Tactical Interoperability Communications Plan that should be completed by March 2006. The County also has an 800 MHz radio system that allows county departments to communicate with each other.

6. **Does your emergency response plan include arrangements regarding special needs of low income and the elderly?**

   Our Health Services Department and Department of Community and Senior Services both have plans for provision of services to the elderly, based on their respective missions. We do not have one specific plan that addresses the needs of low income disaster victims. Instead, we work very closely with Emergency Network Los Angeles (ENLA), a consortium of community-based organizations that address disaster victims' needs based on their specialized areas of expertise. ENLA is a recognized County Operational Area partner and we are a member of their Board of Directors. Our Department of Public Social Services has well-developed plans for the delivery of emergency welfare services to disaster victims. Those services may be accessed at local assistance centers, one-stop centers, or district offices. DPSS also has assessment teams that will go into communities to provide outreach, information and referral services to those in need. DPSS also maintains a cadre of 100 trained shelter managers, which they make available to the American Red Cross to support shelter operations.

7. **Does your plan contain incident management protocols and common standards allowing all responders to understand their roles in an emergency event?**

   Yes. The entire State of California operates under the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). SEMS is based on the Incident Command System and provides for a common organizational structure, common terminology and

common functional duty descriptions, etc. The County of Los Angeles adopted SEMS in 1995 when it was chaptered into law statewide. All County departments are organized under SEMS.

8. **Are the roles of private and volunteer relief organizations defined in your current plan?**

   The role of the American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, and community-based organizations is well-defined. The role of the private sector is addressed in a general way. I am on the Board of Directors for the Business and Industry Council for Emergency Planning and Preparedness (BICEPP) and our office includes BICEPP-member businesses in our Operational Area-wide exercises each year. In some cases, some County departments also have specific relationships with private sector businesses which may be integrated into their departmental plans.

9. **What procedures are contained in your plan for dispersing information to the public during times of emergency?**

   Emergency Public Information (EPI) is addressed in our County ordinance, our Operational Area Emergency Response Plan, and in the Los Angeles County Operational Area EPI Plan. The Sheriff is tasked with lead responsibility for EPI, but they perform that unction with support from other County departments and subject-matter experts. The EPI Plan describes how information will be disseminated to the public via electronic and media outlets. The plan also addresses the use of the Emergency Alert System.

10. **In your experience, what federal resources do you find most effective in handling emergencies?**

    The most essential need local government has following a large disaster is funding to help repair and rebuild critical infrastructure and help disaster victims regain their lives and communities. Following a federally-declared disaster, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) becomes a vital component of successful recovery. During the response phase of a disaster, specialized federal resources such as Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs), Disaster Mortality Response Teams (DMORTs), Urban Search and Rescue Teams, etc., are highly valued assets when brought in to support local emergency response operations. Federal resources are a significant part of a comprehensive and effective response to any large disaster.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much for your testimony. Mr. Stanley.

STATEMENT OF ELLIS STANLEY

Mr. STANLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. And to all of our representatives from the great State of California, thank you too for your support over the years and making sure that we continue to have a very aggressive emergency management philosophy not only in the city and the county, but in the State of California.

I do think that there can be some lessons learned. Somebody a lot smarter than me once said, "if we fail to learn from the failures of the past, we are doomed to repeat them," George Santayana. And I think that we have to take advantage of all the opportunities that we have to learn lessons from the misfortunes that we have seen around the world and now on our own soil with Hurricane Katrina.

On behalf of our new mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, I thank you for allowing us to be part of this as well.

It is important that you understand part of my background over the past 30 years started out in North Carolina as an emergency manager down on the coast of North Carolina, in Brunswick County, then moved to a larger jurisdiction in the triangle area of Durham, NC, then to Atlanta, GA for several years, and now in the city of Los Angeles, the second largest city in the country; 10 million people in the county, 4 million people in the city, 15 million people in the greater metropolitan area.

That is only important because as Ms. Perett indicated, all disasters are local, and it is important that we start preparing at the local level. And on behalf of all of the finest, bravest, and best first responders in the country, we look at also the individuals, ensuring that we push preparedness down to the local level. We understand that when you talk about volunteer organizations, when you talk about private sector, when you talk about other not-for-profits, they have a role and responsibility, and it is important that we incorporate them into the planning process at the table before, during, and after emergencies.

I have not been to the Gulf Coast States yet; however, during the days of its making landfall, I was in the command center of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact [EMAC], a compact of which all 50 States come together to look at what resources and how they can get them into the affected area. Fifty States that have resources, both hard resources and technical expertise.

Our city and our community was one of the first to send urban search and rescue, to send swift water rescue, to make sure that they were on the ground very quick, very well trained, very well equipped to assist in this response. So we did learn lessons from that perspective.

The other thing that we are doing or we are taking the opportunity to is look at the implications and the impact of standards. What are the standards around the Nation that all cities—whether it is a smaller jurisdiction that I worked in or now one of the largest jurisdictions—what standards are needed to make sure that we all are singing off the same sheet of paper that you, as elected offi-

cials, that my local elected officials, that the State elected officials understand how they measure preparedness in their community.

The Congress has a tremendous role, as Ms. Perett indicated, the Emergency Management Performance Grants, where you could assure that every community, every community in this Nation has a trained professional emergency manager in that community. The Emergency Management Accreditation Program is a good tool, and we will be going through that program in Los Angeles to have an outside assessment; not what Ellis Stanley says, as the emergency manager, is our capability, but what an independent peer review can come in and make that assessment and look at it.

We are doing that now in the capital region area, the Council of Governments, from a regional perspective, because we realize, even though it is local, we are not in this by ourselves; it impacts more than just our borders, and it is important that we work very comprehensively and very collaboratively with everyone else that we work with in disasters.

We have a regular meeting of the minds, I dare say, with some of our larger cities: New York, Chicago, the District of Columbia, San Francisco, Miami, and Los Angeles. We meet regularly just to talk about what trends are happening, what things are going on; how are we now reaching a good public education program in our communities to help.

My time is up, and I thank you so much for yours.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stanley follows:]

TESTIMONY OF ELLIS M. STANLEY SR. CEM

GENERAL MANAGER

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

CITY of LOS ANGELES

BEFORE

THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 15, 2005

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before the Committee and provide information on emergency management in the City of Los Angeles. I have been an emergency management professional for nearly 30 years, and have served as the General Manager of the Emergency Preparedness Department for the City of Los Angeles since 1997. Prior to joining the City of Los Angeles, I was the Director of the Atlanta-Foulton County Emergency Management Agency for ten years.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, our concern about the preparations and response at multiple levels should be viewed as an opportunity to focus on the need -- and the steps required -- to build strong and integrated preparedness and response systems. National emergency management standards that were developed by local and state emergency management practitioners are being used and applied every day throughout the nation. As part of the Emergency Management Accreditation Program, or EMAP, these standards provide a framework for evaluating and strengthening a local or state government's preparedness, from identifying hazards, vulnerable populations, and critical infrastructures, to planning, communications, training, exercises, and public education and information. EMAP's process of emergency management standards for local and state governments and verified assessment of such should be built upon and used to elevate our expectations of local and state government preparedness.

Our executives and the public are asking us, emergency management professionals, "Are we prepared?" To that end, the City of Los Angeles will be conducting an assessment of our capability thorough the EMAP process that will allow us to develop a clear roadmap for enhancing our current emergency management plan.

The City of Los Angeles as a candidate for national accreditation is seeking to have a nationally recognized emergency management program that:

- Meets national standards with a mechanism for objective evaluation;

- Enhances public support for emergency management programs by demonstrating accountability;
- Serves as a credible source for information on emergency management practices; and,
- Promotes voluntary and continuous self-improvement of all emergency management programs and functions, both internally and with its partners.

The Emergency Preparedness Department (EPD) created in 1999, is an ordinance department reporting directly to the Mayor and is tasked with leading the City of Los Angeles to prepare for respond to, and recover from disasters, as well as coordinating all city emergency preparedness activities including community education and outreach.

EPD relies on its broad legislative authorities and strong partnerships with federal, state, and other local governments; voluntary organizations; business and industry; and individuals to accomplish its mission. Through these partnerships, the department leads the City to plan and prepare for the risks that face the City—whether natural or man-made—including floods, fires, earthquakes, hurricanes, and terrorist attacks. When disaster strikes, and the local capacity to respond is overwhelmed, and the President declares a disaster, FEMA coordinates with state and local government, for response, recovery, and mitigation efforts.

As EPD moves into the new century, it continues to work to bring the City to a greater level of preparedness, and continues to serve as the primary portal for emergency management information and expertise.

Ellis M. Stanley, Sr. CEM
City of Los Angeles

THEMES OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

While EPD will need to rely on its strengths to carry out its mission, several important themes exert a consistent influence on the way it has set its goals and developed its strategies for achieving them.

Leadership, Coordination and Management
EPD is first and foremost a coordinating agency. EPD achieves its goals primarily through leading, coordinating, and managing integration of local agencies' efforts, as well as those of voluntary organizations, states, and neighborhoods. This means that while EPD can have a great influence, it often does not and cannot exert direct control over the outcomes it seeks. This is precisely why EPD has adopted partnering as a core strategy.

Terrorism and Preparedness
The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon brought new focus on the need to strengthen preparedness and catastrophic disaster planning. As the local organization tasked with leading the City's efforts to prepare for and respond to the consequences of terror attacks, including the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction on American soil, our role in homeland security is now more critical than ever. EPD is committed to working with its partners at all levels and applying the experience and expertise it has gained through managing disasters of all types to ensure that the City is prepared to manage the consequences of terrorism.

State and Local Capability
In conjunction with the new level of effort being directed to preparedness, EPD is committed to working closely with the Federal Government, State of California, Los Angeles County and other local communities, where response to disasters begins, to integrate the emergency manager and first-responder communities. We will also work to ensure integrated and seamless management of every type and magnitude of disaster. With its partners, EPD will assess, and as necessary, build and augment the planning, preparedness, and response capabilities so we can better mitigate the effects of and recovery from disasters.

Shared Responsibility
If the City is to make significant progress toward achieving EPD's vision—*To ensure that the City of Los Angeles has the best Emergency Management Program... Anywhere!* — individuals, business and industry, and government organizations at all levels must share the responsibility. We must all be aware of the risks we face, and make intelligent decisions to deal with those risks both before and after disasters strike. Individually and collectively, we are each responsible for making good decisions, whether we are preparing our homes to better survive a hurricane, fire, flood or earthquake, or are deciding how to repair and rebuild after disaster strikes.
As the September 11 attacks showed, business and industry—the lifeblood of the

City's economy—also bear a great responsibility for evaluating potential risks and developing contingency and disaster plans of their own. Government, and EPD in particular, will continue to bear much of the responsibility for providing information on hazards and their risks, but we are all responsible for using that information to prepare for and respond to disasters.

CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTATION

A number of important challenges confront EPD as it sets about working to achieve its goals, objectives, and strategies.

Workforce Management and Limited Resources
EPD, like most City departments, faces serious challenges in maintaining and growing its workforce. EPD has therefore committed itself to retaining, recruiting, and training a top-notch workforce, and developing a staff with the talent, skills, and dedication necessary to meet the demands of the future. EPD also faces a second problem familiar to all City Departments—limited resources.

Increased Risk
America's metropolitan areas continue to grow in size and density, with many of the largest situated in coastal regions, along earthquake faults, or in other high-risk areas. Commercial and residential developments have meanwhile progressed at a rapid pace across the Nation, expanding into previously unsettled or sparsely settled areas. This exposes growing communities to new risks, especially wildfire, flooding and erosion. To address these growing risks, EPD will continue to emphasize pre-disaster mitigation and insurance. The risks associated with acts of terrorism also pose a significant challenge for EPD. Although EPD has worked for many years in the preparedness arena, we have all gained a new understanding of what is possible. The Nation is looking to the emergency management community to face this challenge.

Change Management
To meet the challenges it faces, EPD must be ready to change—not once, but continuously. This will require a new approach, a new understanding, and a new way of doing business for the agency and those who help carry out its mission. Change must be embraced as a way of life at every level of the agency. This may be the most difficult challenge the agency faces. Since 1999, EPD has handled its mission with much success and as a result, enjoys high public confidence. Resisting the temptation to rest on the agency's past successes is where the greatest challenge may lie. This is no time for overconfidence.

Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to address this Committee. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Ellis M. Stanley, Sr. CEM
City of Los Angeles

CITY OF LOS ANGELES EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

1. **What states of emergency have been declared in your jurisdiction during the last several years?**
    a. During the last two decades, the City of Los Angeles has had more than a dozen Presidential Declaration and many local/state emergency declarations (e.g., 1994 Northridge Earthquake, 1998 El Nino Rainstorms, 2004 Rainstorms).

2. **Who takes immediate operational command over response efforts to emergencies in your jurisdiction?**
    a. In the City of Los Angeles, it depends on the nature of the event. Approx. 85% of all incidents is initially under the operational command of the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) as they primarily relate to life safety and rescue.
    b. The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) has a shared responsibility in many incidents because of the evacuation, security or terrorism elements of the incident.
    c. All City departments play a role in most emergency response situations. LAPD, LAFD or the Department of Public Works, Building & Safety or Emergency Preparedness Department, or another may be the lead agency, depending on the incident.

3. **How do you escalate a state of emergency from local to state to the federal government? Is this escalation criteria defined in your plan?**
    a. The escalation criterion is defined in our Emergency Operations Master Plan and Procedures (Master Plan) and is part of the State of California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS).
        i. SEMS is a statewide program that defines the methodology for interfacing with all levels of government and mutual aid within California.
    b. When the City of Los Angeles activates its Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the County of Los Angeles activates its EOC and the State is immediately notified.
    c. We use web-based emergency management information sharing tools to communicate and share SITREPs, etc.
    d. Requests for the County to declare an emergency in support of the City, would come directly from the Mayor. The County would request the State to support local governments with a State Emergency Declaration.

4. **Does your plan include details on evacuation procedures? If so, what facilities, transportation, health services and recovery resources are immediately available to your citizens?**
    a. With the exception of the Tsunami evacuation, and the fact that our hazards may strike anytime and any place, our evacuation plans are dynamic in that we have to use resources and routes that are available to us following the disaster.
    b. Per the City of Los Angeles Administrative Code, Emergency Operations, our plans do however assign responsibility for all functions relative to evacuation. The LAPD is the department functionally responsible to coordinate evacuation.
    c. All of the resources and capabilities of the Department of Health Services are incorporated in the plan and we train and exercise it.
    d. Los Angeles Department of Transportation has lead responsibility for transportation assets that include other public and private resources.
    e. Sheltering is a collaborative effort lead by Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks and is directly coordinated with the American Red Cross and the Los Angeles Unified School District. Again, as we never know when and where the incident might occur, the shelters are not 'pre-assigned.'

5. **Do you have communications interoperability among all departments and first responders in your jurisdiction?**
    a. In that we plan together, train and exercise together we are interoperable.
    b. Our communications interoperability is a work in progress, i.e., we are feeling gaps by using tools to connect us as we continue to transition to full interoperability.
    c. The City EOC messaging system is Internet-based, allowing all City departments access to information, as well as pre-defined non-City agencies.

6. **Does your emergency response plan include arrangements regarding special needs of low income and the elderly?**
    a. We are one to the most diverse communities in the world and as such we compelled to address all areas of diversity.

7. **Does your plan contain incident management protocols and common standards allowing all responders to understand their roles in an emergency event?**
    a. Yes, SEMS and we are transiting to NIMS (National Incident Management System)
    b. Additionally, the City adopted its Emergency Operations Organization in 1980 predefining emergency response functional roles.

8. **Are the roles of private and volunteer relief organizations defined in your current plan?**
    a. Not only defined, but both private and volunteer organizations have been given seats in our EOC and are included in our notification system.
    b. Both are at the table, before, during and after the event.

9. **What procedures are contained in your plan for dispersing information to the public during times of emergency?**
    a. Although we utilize the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and local media, Warning and Alert Notification continue to be an area that needs considerable improvement nationwide.
    b. Certain areas are covered with automated notification devices but we continue to enhance this element of the plan.
    c. The City owns its own cable television station which is used to disseminate immediate emergency information.
    d. The City also uses it own self-hosted Internet site for posting emergency related information.

10. **In your experience, what federal resources do you find most effective in handling emergencies?**
    a. The obvious answer is money. However, training, planning, exercising are invaluable.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce the next witness. The next witness, Administrator Robert Bobb, is the administrator for the District of Columbia, and I can understand why the chairman called him. It is not simply because he is a neighbor, it is because of his national reputation for managing tough situations, including tough cities.

I am very pleased that Mr. Bobb has been called here today. He is the go-to man in the District if you want to get something done. I want to simply let every one of my members know that Mr. Bobb is overseeing the work that the District is now doing with 300 evacuees from New Orleans that the city brought up and has now at the D.C. National Armory. I want to thank him for that work and welcome him to this hearing, Mr. Bobb.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Bobb, thank you for being here and thanks for the job you are doing.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT C. BOBB

Mr. BOBB. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Ranking Member and members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to appear today to discuss emergency preparedness in the District and some initial lessons learned from Katrina.

My name is Robert C. Bobb, and I am the deputy mayor/city administrator of the District of Columbia. And as we sit here today, we are hosting over 300 evacuees from the city of New Orleans, as well as the Gulf Coast area, as well as the National Capital Region is hosting over 3,000 evacuees.

But before I begin, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of Mayor Anthony Williams, the people of the District of Columbia, and the people of the National Capital Region to express our deepest sympathy and commitment to continued support and foremost consideration in our thoughts and prayers of the people of the Gulf Coast who have been affected by this tragedy. I am myself a survivor of Gulf Coast hurricanes as a native Louisianian, and I know the horrors firsthand of the devastation that they can bring to individuals and families.

The initial lessons that we have learned from the Katrina incident, and while we have a high level of confidence in the District and the National Capital Region in our ability to manage a major event, be it of natural or manmade cause, nevertheless, as a result of the insights we are getting from Katrina, even while events are still unfolding in the Gulf Coast, we are taking a hard look at our plans and capabilities, and the assumptions that underlie them.

The first major area we are reviewing is evacuation. The District has a disaster evacuation plan. We have designated evacuation routes, variable message signage, signal timing algorithms, buses for those without cars, and other aspects of traffic management in place to enable evacuation. And we have tested some of these elements to various degrees, most recently during the July 4th fireworks. But the tragic events of Katrina, especially as it relates to those who choose not to or were unable to evacuate have forced us to challenge some of the assumptions of our evacuation plans.

Our ultimate goal is to have a workable plan in place to evacuate the entire District of Columbia in the unlikely event that such need arises. Although we recently funded a regional walkout plan, our evacuation planning is heavily automobile-based.

We are now analyzing census data and information from our Department of Motor Vehicles to determine what areas in the District have high concentration of residents without cars. We will adjust our plans for the use and deployment of buses based on this analysis. We will also integrate other options such as water-based transport into our evacuation planning.

Most importantly, we will much more specifically tailor our emergency preparedness, training and education to address neighborhood-specific issues so that individuals understand explicitly what they need to do in the face of an evacuation of their neighborhood.

We will also work more closely with the National Organization of Disabilities and our Disability Preparedness Center, as well as other residents with special needs and the organizations that serve them, to ensure our evacuation planning is practical and makes sense for all District residents. We will review plans for nursing homes, hospitals, jails, halfway houses, and group homes to ensure that no one is left behind.

Another area of major review will be our sheltering capacity and planning. We currently have plans in place that would enable sheltering a portion of the District's nighttime population. But based on our own experience with sheltering Katrina evacuees at the D.C. Armory, there are a number of small but important logistical issues we will have to work through that will improve future sheltering operations.

We have worked hard since September 11th to improve our communications capabilities within and across governments and between governments and residents. We have achieved voice interoperability for first responders across the region and are developing full data interoperability, and we now have a regional alert notification system. But Katrina emphasized the importance of robustness and redundancy of communication systems, as well as their vulnerability, during a massive event.

We are also doubling our efforts to sign up residents and the business community for our alert systems, and we are reviewing our capabilities for communications among second responders and support personnel.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bobb follows:]

Government of the District of Columbia

Executive Office of the Mayor

Testimony of
Robert C. Bobb
Deputy Mayor / City Administrator

"Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina"

Committee on Government Reform
United States House of Representatives
Tom Davis, Chair

September 15, 2005

Room 2154
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
10:00 A.M.

Testimony of Robert C. Bobb, Deputy Mayor/City Administrator, District of Columbia
House Committee on Government Reform
Public Hearing on Lessons Learned from Hurricane Katrina
September 15, 2005

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member and members of the Committee thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss emergency preparedness and the lessons learned from Katrina. As we sit here today, our efforts to support the Katrina response and recovery continue. I am certain that as time goes on and we gain better insight into what did or did not happen in terms of preparation and response on the Gulf Coast, we will be better able to identify improvements in our own preparedness.

But before I begin, I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of Mayor Anthony Williams, the people of the District of Columbia, and the people of the National Capital Region, to express our deepest sympathy, commitment to continued support, and foremost consideration in our thoughts and prayers to the people of the Gulf Coast who have been affected by this tragedy. I am myself a survivor of Gulf Coast hurricanes, and know the horrors and devastation they can bring to individuals and families. We will continue to do all we can to help in any way possible the people affected by as well as those working on the recovery from Katrina.

Overview

Since September 11, 2001, the District of Columbia and the National Capital Region have been at the forefront of preparing ourselves for any disaster we might face. With the seat of the federal government housed in our great city, we recognize and accept the awesome responsibility that we have. As is the case with cities, regions, and states across the country, September 11 changed the way we think about how we can prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from a large scale event. Based on what we have seen over the last few weeks, Katrina will do likewise.

In the District and in the region, we have taken an all-hazards approach to our preparedness. We have made great progress in strengthening our capabilities and have done so with the engagement of a multitude of government, private sector, and community partners. That said, we always seek ways to improve. We learn from every exercise or real event we have here in the region, and incorporate improvements in our preparedness as a result. And we will certainly study all of the circumstances surrounding hurricane Katrina to ensure we incorporate those lessons learned as well.

In my testimony today, I will discuss the challenges we face in the District of Columbia, and how we are confronting those challenges. Moreover, I will point to some distinctions between the District and New Orleans that are relevant to differences in how we would manage an event such as Katrina. Finally, I will discuss aspects of our preparedness that we are reexamining in light of Katrina.

Challenges we face

High risk of event, including events that may come without warning

As the nation's capital, the District of Columbia and the surrounding region, with its concentration of symbolic and critical federal government facilities, is one of the highest risk

areas in the country for a terrorist attack. The White House, the Capitol, headquarters for the FBI and the World Bank, as well as the many monuments and structures of national historic significance and the crowds they attract render the District vulnerable to those who would do our nation harm.

The region is also in the path of hurricanes, and though they are often tempered due to inland travel, they can create significant impact, such as what we experienced with Hurricane Isabel two years ago. Hurricanes can spawn tornadoes and are often accompanied by significant flooding, both of which can cause great property damage and loss of life.

The aging infrastructure in the District and the region also make it vulnerable to power and water outages, which could cause significant disruption. The recent closure of the power plant in Alexandria removed a significant element of the District's electric power system's redundancy. Recent breaks of the District's century-old water mains left thousands without or with reduced-pressure water.

Disasters do not respect political jurisdictional boundaries. Both man-made and natural disasters are likely to directly or indirectly impact many of the jurisdictions that comprise the National Capital Region simultaneously. The region includes two states, numerous counties and cities, and of course the federal government.

Preparation therefore requires coordination and collaboration of multiple governments. While we have been working together as a region for many years, and have developed strong relationships and practices of collaboration, coordination with some elements of the federal government remains a challenge. Some executive and legislative branch agencies focus on their own mission and people without regard to the surrounding population, which can pose command and control problems during an emergency.

Many of the federal agencies have their own law enforcement units with emergency response and evacuation plans that are not shared and therefore coordinated with the District. To properly prepare for a disaster, all first responders need to be aware of each other's responsibilities and plans. Moreover, the nearly three dozen law enforcement agencies in the District need to coordinate their plans and activities with our Metropolitan Police Department, the primary law enforcement agency in the District. We are making efforts to address these challenges to ensure that the District is prepared for a catastrophic incident.

Diverse population, including low-income and special needs

The District of Columbia has a significant poor and sick population, as well as many with special needs. As we've seen in New Orleans, it is not safe to assume that all people within a city will be prepared for or able to respond to an emergency in the same way. As the number two transit-using city in the country, the District has a large percentage of people that do not own cars, for example. Our plans need to accommodate this kind of diversity.

How will we meet these challenges?

Through significant investments in planning, training, equipment, and scenario-based exercises, we are confident that the District and the region will be able to meet the challenges that we may face. When the District decided to craft its District Response Plan to mirror the Federal Response Plan, we were convinced that it would pay dividends in any major disaster. We have implemented the District Response Plan for events including Hurricane Isabel, Anthrax incidents, IMF/World Bank protests, the Presidential Inauguration, the state funeral for Ronald Reagan, and dozens of other incidents. None of these events was as catastrophic as hurricane Katrina, but each one tested the plan in a different way and required significant coordination.

The District understands the value in a plan is in how well people and agencies train to, exercise, and update the plan with lessons learned. We have done just that.

- We have trained thousands of first responders on the National Incident Management System, the District Response Plan, responding to weapons of mass destruction, and simply how to work and manage emergencies from our emergency operations center. The primary reason was to build capacity for events such as September 11th or Hurricane Katrina.

- We have educated residents and workers in the District by developing community preparedness plans and exercising those plans with District, business and resident representatives in 39 separate neighborhoods across the District.

- We have initiated several new notification systems including a text alert and voice alert systems allowing us to call every phone in the district or send text messages to phones, pagers and e-mail accounts for people who have registered.

- We have conducted exercises at all levels of the District Government in partnership with other government partners to focus on real-life scenarios. On March 3 of this year, for example, the District held a senior leader exercise using a hurricane incident with significantly more damage than we saw during Hurricane Isabel to review the corrective actions we made after that storm. During this exercise, the leaders developed plans for closing schools, making mass transit decisions, protecting critical infrastructure, opening and managing shelters, deploying medical resources, rescuing victims, and evacuating residents.

- The District has developed, trained to, and exercised a Strategic National Stockpile Plan, which has achieved the highest rating (green) from the Centers for Disease Control. This plan outlines how we will get needed pharmaceuticals from the Stockpile to District responders and residents in an emergency situation.

- The District was one of the first jurisdictions in the nation to achieve accreditation through the Emergency Management Accreditation Program.

The District Response Plan has proven success and we plan to build on its success. Furthermore, the District has established good and strong working relationships with the surrounding states and with federal government agencies. The District emergency response plans have to coordinate across the region and with the federal government. The Mayor of the District of Columbia along with the Governors of Virginia and Maryland have taken the necessary steps to strengthen the regions' emergency response capabilities.

Following 9/11, the Mayor of the District of Columbia and the Governors of Maryland and Virginia committed to working together to prepare the region. With the President, they established a Senior Policy Group to lead decision making and coordination between local and state governments, and the federal government. This group works with the region's Chief Administrative Officers, who represent local government leadership, to provide a coordinated and institutionalized process for defining needs across the region and for meeting those needs through coordinated decision-making and implementation.

There are a multitude of areas where we have achieved tangible progress across the region in preparing for large scale incidents. These achievements range from equipment enhancements for first responders to improved information sharing and coordination among communities, state and federal entities, and the private sector.

Equipment purchases have and continue to capitalize on our regional structure by acquiring, allocating, standardizing and managing equipment and systems regionally to enhance preparedness, response and recovery efforts. Just a few of the projects we have initiated include the following.

- Through the purchase of 1,250 800 MHz radios, we have developed equipment caches that can be deployed in an emergency when other means of communications are inoperable. These radios can be deployed in two hours, can be reprogrammed while they are in use, have an immediate 24-hour battery life, and are supplemented by 2,500 rechargeable batteries. They can be used in an emergency and will allow all regional emergency medical services, fire, and law enforcement officials the ability to communicate throughout the region. These radios are housed in separate caches in Maryland and Virginia, with a third to be added soon in the District.

- We are developing a complete interoperable data communications infrastructure that will enable emergency response officials within the region to share and exchange emergency information in real time. It will lead to the implementation of secure, diverse, robust physical networks over which shared data and messages reach their destinations via the implementation of interoperability hub for data sets and messaging functions exchanged by regional partners.

- We have equipped our first responders with Level A/B gear for first responders, such as tactical law enforcement groups, which will allow them to function in the midst of a Chemical, Biological Radioactive, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) attack. This gear is for mid-level CBRNE attacks and will allow law enforcement to maintain a stable

number of personnel on site during or after an emergency, and provides for equipment interoperability across the region.

- We have funded the purchase of hospital surge beds to be added to the hospitals within the region. This initiative, along with investments in medical mass transport vehicles and an information system to track patient flow and provider capacity, will enhance the ability of the region to handle a significant increase of patients during a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

The region also ensures preparedness efforts are fully coordinated and appropriately integrated so that preparedness and prevention planning efforts are consistent, non-duplicative, efficient, and effective. Some of these initiatives include the following.

- We have developed and just last week launched a Citizen Education Campaign to raise awareness and to provide emergency preparedness information to residents and businesses, with a focus on how to prepare for a major disaster. We timed this campaign to coincide with National Preparedness Month. The arrival of Katrina has made this campaign all the more timely. Katrina has certainly shown us that individual, family, and business preparedness is vital to a region's ability to respond to and recover from a disaster.

- We have developed disaster preparedness educational materials entitled "Masters of Disaster", which are becoming part of area schools' curricula for grades K through 12. Currently, 4,341 full kits have been distributed to 459 schools, and kits for home-schooled children are available in public libraries throughout the region.

- We have developed a syndromic surveillance and notification system for public health emergencies. This system enables health professionals to detect unusual disease patterns at their early stages by conducting an around-the-clock regional surveillance.

- We are developing designated secure and safe locations, where residents can receive comprehensive assistance in their efforts to locate family members. The goal of this effort is to consolidate the victim data, missing person data, and inquires from various sources, which could include shelters, hospitals, medical examiners' offices, and other locations.

And we have made progress in addressing special needs populations. As a region, we have developed the Disability Preparedness Center Initiative, which is a program designed to prepare first responders to aid people with physical and mental disabilities and other special needs during an emergency.

The Disability Preparedness Center has provided technical assistance and skills development to first responders to assist persons with disabilities. The Center sought persons with disabilities to assist with developing response plans, plan and implement an information campaign to inform

the public, establish a regional Disability Advisory Committee, and develop emergency communication network for persons with disabilities.

In 2004, the region hosted a two-and-a-half day conference on Emergency Preparedness and Special Needs Populations and Planning issues. The conference agenda included disaster preparedness, response, and recovery training and forums specific to the special needs population. The audience was drawn from government, emergency first responders, service network, individual advocacy groups and private business and technology communities, and covered the following topics:

- Effective communication of emergency messages before, during and after an emergency
- Special needs shelter location identification
- Staffing ratios
- Equipment resources
- Appropriate allocation and coordination of accessible transportation during evacuations
- Distribution of special needs emergency guidance

In the spring of 2005, the Disability Preparedness Center worked to determine first responder needs, trained first responders to work with individuals with special needs, disseminated accessible products, provided media for individuals with intellectual deficits, planned simulations and exercises, and conducted a focus test group for responders on how to deal with individuals with disabilities.

With continued specialized training, such as the training provided by the Disability Preparedness Center, the District will be better prepared to assist the elderly, physically disabled, and mentally disabled in an emergency.

Differences between New Orleans and the District

While there are certainly lessons from Katrina that will help us improve our preparedness here in the District and in the region, there are differences between the two areas that are relevant to any comparative analysis.

First, there are geographic differences between the District and New Orleans. New Orleans is coastal and below sea-level, which renders it more vulnerable to tropical storms and flooding. While we have faced extreme weather in the National Capital Region, we are not likely to experience a hurricane comparable to Katrina nor the flooding that followed, which brings its own set of challenges.

Second, the District of Columbia and the surrounding jurisdictions have done a considerable amount of planning and have conducted numerous exercises and collectively experienced a number of real events requiring response to natural and man-made disasters. Week in and week out, we work together, prepare together, plan together, train together, and exercise together as a region. We do face challenges due to the fact that we have many jurisdictions at all levels of government throughout the region, each with its own jurisdictional autonomy. But when it

comes to emergency preparedness, we have developed a structure and practice that enables and has institutionalized a regional approach that respects but transcends political boundaries. This strength as a region provides us with a robust resource base that serves us well in dealing with major events.

Third, unlike the City of New Orleans, the District does not have the bureaucratic issues that can arise when trying to determine whether an emergency is a state or city matter. Because the District of Columbia is both city and state, when a disaster strikes, the Mayor has sole and full responsibility and all agencies follow his command and adhere to the emergency response plans in place. The convenience of this arrangement means he does not have a state or local jurisdictions to negotiate with. Unless it is an event that requires federal jurisdiction due to its nature or magnitude, the Mayor of the District of Columbia is in charge and will execute the District Emergency Response plans. Even when a federal agency may technically be the lead for an event, it is in most cases the District's first responders that are on the scene and lead the initial response. In all cases we, along with our federal and regional partners, manage incidents in accordance with the National Response Plan and National Incident Management System.

Finally, a major and perhaps the most significant distinction between New Orleans and the District is the presence of the federal government. Should there be a disaster that overwhelms the resources of the state and local governments in the region, the proximity of the federal government and nearby federal assets assure more timely deployment of federal resources. And while Katrina has taught us to be cautious about our reliance on federal response, the availability of federal resources in and around the nation's capital and the well established working relationship we have with the federal government will likely ensure federal aid when needed.

However, the presence of the federal government does present some challenges. Here in the region, we have experienced a history of independent actions on the part of some federal agencies, such as street closures, which can actually impede disaster response. Other independent actions, such as personnel evacuations or employee prophylaxis distribution can likewise complicate local response. While in many respects we work daily with federal partners, we have learned that the federal government is not monolithic, and good working relationships with some parts of the federal government does not guarantee coordination with all parts.

But the District is unique in that we do coordinate with the federal government on everyday events and incidents. Over the last two years, we have planned and coordinated a presidential inauguration, a state funeral, the World War II memorial dedication, 4th of July fireworks with hundreds of thousands of spectators, and dozens of other smaller events. The planning for these events, the training of our personnel together and the mutual exercises we hold with the federal government and our regional stakeholders provides us with a good understanding of how our federal partners will work with us during a major event.

Our Metropolitan Police Department knows how to coordinate and work with military and other local police officers from across the country because they have done it. Our local Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department works with local fire-fighting, search & rescue, and emergency medical service departments from Maryland and Virginia for almost every major

event. Our Emergency Management Agency coordinates activities such as early work releases during snowstorms each winter and emergency notification throughout the region every day, and coordinates with local, state, and federal counterparts across the region.

Whether we are investigating a possible terrorist incident or we are responding to a catastrophic event, our daily coordination allows us to have a relationship unlike that between the federal government and any other state or region. We know each other, we work with each other, we plan with each other and we have responded together.

Initial Lessons Learned

As I have expressed, I have a high level of confidence in the District's and the region's ability to manage a major event, be it of natural or man-made cause. Nevertheless, as a result of the insights we are getting from Katrina, even while events are still unfolding on the Gulf Coast, we are taking a hard look at our plans and capabilities and the assumptions that underlie them.

The first major area we are reviewing is evacuation. The District has a disaster evacuation plan. We have designated evacuation routes, variable message signage, signal timing algorithms, buses for those without cars, and other aspects of traffic management in place to enable evacuation. And we have tested some of these elements to various degrees, most recently following the July 4th fireworks. But the tragic events of Katrina, especially as it relates to those who chose not to or were unable to evacuate, have forced us to challenge some of the assumptions of our evacuation plans. Ultimately, we need to have a workable plan in place to evacuate the entire District of Columbia in the unlikely event that such need arises.

Although we recently funded a regional walk-out plan, to enable us to manage what we know will be significant pedestrian traffic resulting from a downtown event, our evacuation planning is heavily automobile-based. We are now analyzing census data and information from our Department of Motor Vehicles to determine what areas in the District have high concentrations of residents without cars. We will adjust our plans for the use and deployment of buses based on this analysis. We will also integrate other options, such as water-based transport, into our evacuation planning. More importantly, we will much more specifically tailor our emergency preparedness training and education to address neighborhood-specific issues, so that individuals understand explicitly what they need to do in the face of an evacuation of their neighborhood.

We will also work more closely with the National Organization on Disabilities and our Disability Preparedness Center, as well as other residents with special needs and the organizations that serve them to ensure our evacuation planning is practical and makes sense for all District residents. We will review plans for nursing homes, hospitals, jails, halfway houses, and group homes to ensure that no one is left behind. We will likewise review our policies and make legislative changes if necessary regarding mandatory evacuation to identify those circumstances under which the Mayor should mandate evacuation. And finally, we will evaluate our plan under various road closure assumptions, since an event itself or the actions of federal agencies resulting from an event could impair the planned flow of traffic.

Another area of major review will be our sheltering capacity and planning. We currently have plans in place that would enable sheltering a portion of the District's nighttime population. Based on our own experience with sheltering Katrina evacuees at the DC Armory, there are a number of small but important logistical issues we have worked through that will improve future sheltering operations. But more importantly, we will be reevaluating our plans for situations that exceed our sheltering capacity. We do have mutual aid agreements and are a signatory to the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. And even on an informal basis within the region, we routinely work together and are currently collaborating on sheltering evacuees. But we will ensure our plans contemplate wholesale sheltering requirements that may arise as a result of a Katrina-level disaster.

We have worked hard since September 11 to improve our communications capabilities, within and across governments and between government and residents. We have achieved voice interoperability for first responders across the region and are developing full data interoperability, and we now have a regional alert notification system. But Katrina emphasized the importance of robustness and redundancy of communications systems, as well as their vulnerability during a massive event. We will be redoubling our efforts to sign up residents and business community for our alert systems. We will be reviewing our capabilities for communications among second responders and support personnel. We will be exploring the potential effectiveness of outdoor audible warning systems. And we will even more aggressively use our Citizens Awareness Campaign to convey the importance of individual and family planning to enable communications during and after an event.

More generally in terms of resident engagement, we firmly believe that participation is essential in the prevention, preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery from disasters of all magnitudes. Jurisdictions across the region have implemented Citizen Corps programs. Through Citizen Corps, we are developing a region-wide network of disaster volunteer reception centers in order to direct convergent, unaffiliated volunteers into an organization capable of deployment based on real time requests. These centers will fall under the guidance and in conformity with and activated under the direction of each respective jurisdiction's local emergency management office. In the wake of Katrina, we are reviewing our plans for activating volunteers to assist in our response, from Citizen Corps to the Emergency Healthcare Reserve Corps to the Medical Reserve Corps. In particular, we need to ensure that directly and through our volunteer network we reach residents of all social and economic backgrounds. As part of this process, we will strengthen our community outreach with a more grass roots, block-by-block, neighborhood-specific approach to disseminating information and engaging our community.

A general initial lesson learned from Katrina is the need for flexibility in plans. Many of our plans are built on basic assumptions that an event such as Katrina could shatter. Plans cannot account for every eventuality, but must be flexible and adaptable to a wide range of situations. The element of human behavior and the uncertainty it brings has to be factored in to response planning. We will be evaluating the flexibility of our plans and looking at the behavioral assumptions that are in them. One clear lesson is that we need to consider the perspective of the people on whom we are relying to respond, and the personal situation they may be facing in the

event of a major disaster. Not every person activated in our response plans is a response professional on a day-to-day basis; and although they have all been trained and have exercised our plans, we must consider and work to mitigate individual responses that may be inconsistent with the needs presented during an emergency. For example, we will review means of providing assurance of the safety of families of responders, so that the responders themselves can focus on their vital tasks.

Because the nation is still in the thick of the response to Katrina and just now entering the recovery phase, it is too early to have a comprehensive picture and therefore full after-action reporting of the event and the preparations for it. And here in the nation's capital, we have worked hard, particularly over the past four years, to strengthen our preparedness in a strategic and coordinated manner. I am confident that we are well prepared for most events that the region may face.

That said, we employ a continuous improvement philosophy when it comes to emergency preparedness. There already are lessons we are learning from Katrina and there will be more to come that will enhance and improve our capabilities and confidence. What has transpired on the Gulf Coast is certainly a human tragedy of unprecedented proportions in this country. We have a duty to ensure that we learn from this experience so that as a nation we never again experience a tragedy of that scale again.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

1. **What states of emergency have been declared in your jurisdiction during the last several years?**

September 2005:	Hurricane Katrina, FEMA-EM-3226-DC
September 2003:	Hurricane Isabel, FEMA-DR-1493-DC
February 2003:	Snowstorm, FEMA-EM-3178-DC
August 2001:	Severe weather/flooding, FEMA-DR-1389-DC
August 2000:	Severe weather/thunderstorm, FEMA-DR-1338-DC
January 2000:	Snowstorm, FEMA-EM-1325-DC

2. **Who takes immediate operational command over response efforts to emergencies in your jurisdiction?**

To effectively manage emergencies, the District abides by the Incident Command System (ICS), which is a component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The ICS provides a framework or set of guidelines that helps different agencies respond to the same incident in an efficient manner. The system calls for the use of common terminology, modular organization, integrated communications, a unified command structure, consolidated plans, designated incident facilities, and comprehensive resource management.

In the District, it has been our experience that when an emergency incident occurs, District law enforcement, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), the District Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS) are generally the first to arrive and will assume immediate command control.

Specifically, if there are fire or life/safety concerns, FEMS will assume immediate operational command. The only exception to this is when there is an immediate threat present.[1] In this case MPD will be the lead until the threat has been neutralized. In all cases involving multiple agencies, the unified command structure is enacted. For incidents in which there is criminal activity, MPD will be the lead agency for the investigation after the fire or life safety concerns have been mitigated.

There are some instances that require District emergency personnel to relinquish control. For instance, when an emergency is deemed an act of terrorism, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has primary jurisdiction over such incidents and will assume operational command[2]. History has shown that in these cases, the FBI works closely with MPD and FEMS, in many cases having leaving the local agencies operational structure in tact.

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[1] A threat is identified as a improvised explosive device, armed gunman, etc.
[2] The National Response Plan assigns a lead Federal agency for all incidents of National Significance when local assets are insufficient or overwhelmed.

There are also instances where federal law enforcement agencies will assume operational command, such as, emergency incidents that occur on federal property, within their jurisdiction[3]. During these incidents the federal agency will assume control. MPD and/or FEMS will provide assistance, if requested, to the applicable federal agency.

3. **How do you escalate a state of emergency from local to state to the federal government? Is this escalation criteria defined in your plan?**

   The process for requesting a Federal Disaster Declaration is based on the local and state governments being overwhelmed by the magnitude of the event. The Public Assistance (PA) program has set a statewide threshold of $1.14/per capita to establish an event being outside of the State's ability to manage without federal assistance.

4. **Does your plan include details on evacuation procedures? If so, what facilities, transportation, health services and recovery resources are immediately available to your citizens?**

   The District Response Plan tasks the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) with the duty of developing and implementing the Emergency Surface Transportation Evacuation Plan. DDOT emergency plans have identified emergency broadcast stations citizens should listen to, deployment of variable message signs, and evacuation routes.

   DDOT in coordination with the Department of Public Works, the Metropolitan Police Department, and neighboring jurisdictions will modify operations of necessary streets, roads, highways, bridges, and ongoing construction projects on the District owned and controlled emergency evacuation routes. DDOT will initiate coordination with the appropriate agencies for federally controlled routes within the District and adjacent regional agencies as identified by regional transpiration and law enforcement personnel. DDOT will also coordinate with other support agencies to provide transportation when the plan is activated.

   Evacuees are located to shelters as identified in the District Response Plan. The District Department of Human Services is the lead for mass care, responsible for addressing basic shelter needs including food, social services, health services, recreation, and transportation, much as they are currently providing for Katrina evacuees at the DC Armory. The Department will coordinate with the American Red Cross, the D.C. Emergency Management Agency, Federal agencies, and local voluntary agencies to meet the variety of needs.

   The District Department of Health (DOH) supports mass care with the provision of health and medical services. DOH manages the District's Strategic National Stockpile Program, which recently received the highest possible rating for preparedness, a Green

[3] Examples of this are the United States Park Police, who main control over United States Park territory and the United States Capitol Police, who maintain control over the Capitol grounds.

Rating, from the Centers for Disease Control. DOH has assembled emergency medical volunteers (Emergency Healthcare Reserve Corps) to assist patients in during catastrophic emergencies.

5. **Do you have communications interoperability among all departments and first responders in your jurisdiction?**

The District has a unified radio network operating at both 460 and 800 MHz. The Police, operating at 460 MHz and the other District departments operating at 800 MHz, can seamlessly communicate (radios can be pre-programmed to operate between agencies).

Within the District we have interoperability with First Responders from other jurisdictions and federal agencies, some seamless others require manual patching (using patching devices such as the ACU1000).

For District agencies on 800 MHz (all but MPD) traveling outside of the District we have seamless interoperability in the National Capitol Region with the exception of Prince George's County who is in the process of upgrading their radio network. MPD requires manual patching in the majority of areas outside the District.

Manual patching supports interoperability, but is less reliable and operationally complicated. Given the limited spectrum allocations at the time of our upgrade (2002), we could not move MPD to 700 MHz, thus creating more seamless interoperability in the region. The 700 MHz spectrum allocations assigned to Public Safety by Congress in 1996 would have prevented this problem. Sadly, this spectrum remains un-cleared of TV broadcasts and therefore unavailable for use.

To provide redundancy, many first responders have pagers, cell phones, satellite phones, and other wireless devices to supplement radio communications.

We currently depend on commercial providers to transport data to our First Responders in the field. Unfortunately these networks do not provide the priority of service and the needed redundancy to reliability deliver mission critical information. In a major event such as Hurricane Katrina, our First Responders will be limited to above voice communications as the commercial data networks will likely fail due to congestion as experienced during the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

Operating under an experimental FCC license, the District has deployed the Nation's First pilot Wireless Broadband network for First Responders. This network provides prioritized interoperable video and bandwidth intensive data communications to local, regional and federal First Responders. Unfortunately, the full use of the District's Pilot Broadband network can not be realized and continued dependency on commercial services is necessary due to the lack of additional and cleared 700 MHz spectrum.

National Capital Region leaders agree on the value of a regional seamlessly interoperable broadband wireless network of networks and have authorized a program to address this critical need. However, full funding and additional cleared 700 MHz spectrum is needed to complete this network.

The District recognized this national need two years ago, and founded the Spectrum Coalition for Public Safety (www.spectrumcoalition.org). Together with 25 States, Cities, Regions, Counties and Public Safety organizations we have worked diligently to bring this national need to the Congress' attention. We support the ongoing efforts by many legislators to clear and assign additional 700 MHz spectrum.

6. **Does your emergency response plan include arrangements regarding special needs of low income and the elderly?**

The District response Plan does not specifically state special arrangements for low-income, however it is implied that their needs will be met because of the special training our first responders have received in assisting those with special needs and the elderly.

In addition to the training, two ESFs include the D.C. Office of Aging, which provides assistance to the Elderly. The plan calls for the Office of Aging to assist with transportation, distribution of emergency relief items, assistance with sheltering the elderly in place, relocation to shelters, and designated feeding and health care sites for the elderly.

7. **Does your plan contain incident management protocols and common standards allowing all responders to understand their roles in an emergency event?**

The District Response Plan clearly describes the roles and responsibilities of an agencies and individuals during emergencies. The District Response Plan has a framework of 15 Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). This ESF framework establishes a process and structure for the efficient, coordinated, and effective delivery of agency assistance to the District in times of a public emergency. The plan also provides rapid response and functional coordination with regional partners and federal agencies.

We are currently updating our Homeland Security Strategic Plan and the District Response Plan, which will fully align us with the National Response Plan and National Incident Management System, under which we are currently training and operating.

8. **Are the roles of private and volunteer relief organizations defined in your current plan?**

The District Response Plan has a Donation and Volunteer Management ESF, which coordinates and volunteer management. The Emergency Management Agency (EMA) serves as the primary agency for managing donations during an emergency and coordinating the efforts of private organizations. However, EMA has formed a Donations Coordination Team, which is comprised of are charities such as the American Red Cross, Catholic Charities, FEMA Donations Coordinator, Capitol Area Food Banks, DC Vision, Adventist Community Service, The Salvation Army, and other disaster relief groups. In conjunction with EMA, ServeDC manages volunteer efforts, including Citizen Corps and Community Emergency Response Teams.

9. What procedures are contained in your plan for dispersing information to the public during times of emergency?

Public information during emergencies is the responsibility of Emergency Support Function #14 (ESF-14), Media Relations and Community Outreach. The lead District agency for this ESF is the Executive Office of the Mayor. ESF-14 follows procedures outlined in the District Response Plan (DRP) and in a Joint Information Center (JIC) manual developed to support the JIC operation.

Specific elements of these procedures include:

- Development of an initial media relations and community outreach plan
- Identification, notification and deployment of key staff to work in the JIC; roles and responsibilities of JIC staff are outlined in the JIC manual.
- Coordination with regional and federal partners, including FEMA PIOs, to insure unity of message
- Timelines for making information available to the public - first message within the first hour and updates hourly or as needed.

The JIC Manual contains detailed information about the Joint Information System, the types of emergencies and disasters and the corresponding JIC response levels, PIO functions and responsibilities, guidelines for working with the news media and sample news releases.

In addition to the procedures outlined in the DRP and the JIC manual, ESF-14 also has access to Alert-DC, the city's four-part citizen emergency notification system. Alert DC is a ground-breaking system of cutting-edge techniques and widespread communication devices to keep residents informed and prepared for emergency situations. The program provides residents, commuters, and visitors with four different ways to learn about emergencies in the District and surrounding areas. The four subsystems are DC Text Alert, DC Voice Alert, the Emergency Alert System and the Emergency Information Center website.

The decision to use each system is one made by senior leadership of EMA. Personnel in EMA's 24-hour operations center contact a representative of the agency's senior management through a hierarchical process until a decision is made to issue a public notification. A part of that decision is to identify the scope of the notification, that is, which areas of the population will be notified as well as how many and which of the four systems should be employed. The most commonly used is DC Text Alert. During any major event all of the systems could be activated simultaneously. Generally, messages will go out within a few minutes of DCEMA being advised of an incident. The text and voice systems can reach tens of thousands of devices each minute. All Emergency Alert Systems messages are transmitted to all broadcasters for airing simultaneously within seconds.

DC Text Alert allows citizens to receive emergency messages about an event on text-capable devices - cell phone, computer email, pager and Personal Digital Assistant (PDA). Citizens must enroll online at Alert.dc.gov and be able to identify the types of

their devices and their access numbers or addresses. They can also select the neighborhoods and/or schools about which they wish to receive messages. They can select as many schools and neighborhoods as they wish. It is a voluntary system and is used to communicate emergency data but also important incidents affecting the city such as major road closures, utility outages, severe weather watches, etc. Enrollees in the system may elect not to receive certain types of non-life threatening messages. The system is capable of sending messages in multiple languages. Text messages are also automatically sent to XM radio for broadcast on their DC area emergency broadcast weather and traffic channel.

DC Voice Alert allows emergency managers to notify residents by telephone of an actual or impending incident that may require them to take some protective action (evacuate, shelter-in-place, etc.). Each landline telephone is geolocated by its service address Emergency managers can select very precise geographic areas and call the phones in that area to deliver emergency instructions. Instructions can be delivered in multiple languages and formatted for devices for the hearing impaired. Home and most business lines are automatically registered; the system will be modified at a future date to register cell phone numbers.

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) employs commercial broadcast media, radio and television to disseminate emergency information. EMA has installed new equipment in conjunction with the Maryland Emergency Management Agency at several area radio and television stations as part of its management of the EAS, in partnership with local media outlets. The new equipment will allow EMA to transmit via satellite or the Internet, emergency messages or priority news information simultaneously to each of the stations and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for broadcast to the public and for relay of the information to other local stations for their use.

The new equipment is being provided to a number of local stations including WBIG-FM, WASH-FM, WWDC-FM, WMZQ-FM, WTEM-AM, WWRC-AM, WIHT-FM, WPGC-FM & AM, WTOP-AM, WGMS-FM, WMAL-AM, WRQX-FM, WJZW-FM, WHUR-FM and News Channel 8/WJLA TV Channel 7. DCEMA is also in the process of installing equipment at the National Weather Service that will allow broadcast over the NOAA weather alert radio system.

The Emergency Information Center (EIC) web site (alert.dc.gov) is a cross-agency portal for emergency preparedness information that also serves as the official DC government source of information during an emergency or disaster. During non-emergency conditions the EIC portal provides links to numerous DC and national sites that have preparedness information. It also allows citizens to navigate through specially prepared District maps to quickly find medical, police, fire and other information. During emergencies the site provides immediate information about closures and other conditions pertaining to the emergency, including location specific information in both text and mapping format. Maps are dynamically updated to display current information including, but not limited to, any shelters or evacuation routes which may be closed.

Regional Notifications are now possible as well. Using the Department of Homeland Security Urban Area Security Initiative grant program the programs running DC Text Alert, Roam Secure Alert Network (RSAN) and DC Voice Alert, Twenty First Century

Communications (TFCCI), have been offered to each of the eighteen jurisdictions in the National Capital Region (NCR). RSAN systems have been installed in every NCR jurisdiction. Proliferation of TFCCI to each jurisdiction desiring the service is underway.

10. In your experience, what federal resources do you find most effective in handling emergencies?

We work directly with FEMA. When resources from other federal agencies are required, those requests are made through FEMA without necessarily having direct contact with the agency providing the asset. We have always found FEMA to be responsive and cooperative in assisting the District in meeting the needs of our residents.

We also have an outstanding relationship with the FBI – long standing relationships through our Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) have forged a seamless operational team when federal assistance is needed. In the past they have provided us with federal resources very quickly in response to threats and emergencies. May also mention that all of the federal uniform law enforcement agencies (Capitol Police, United States Park Police, Federal Protective Services) have traditionally provided personnel and other resources to assist us with unexpected events and emergencies.

Finally, we work regularly with the Department of Homeland Security, particularly the Office of National Capital Region Coordination. We also have personnel manning the Homeland Security Operations Center and the Transportation Security Operations Center. These conduits provide for enhanced situational awareness and general communication during emergency situations.

Mr. SHAYS [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Bobb.

The Chair would recognize Mr. Robertson.

STATEMENT OF DAVID J. ROBERTSON

Mr. ROBERTSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am David Robertson, executive director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

And if I had just one message for the committee this afternoon, it would be that any significant emergency in any one city or county quickly becomes a regional emergency requiring a coordinated response.

In the Washington metropolitan area, we have worked very hard to do just that. On many levels we certainly believe that we are better prepared, but certainly there is more to do.

In the aftermath of Katrina, it doesn't mean that we need to abandon the good work and the planning to date, but evaluate that work against new scenarios and a higher standard of preparedness and response. To that end, the Council of Governments Board of Directors, at the initial request of Montgomery County Executive Doug Duncan and other top elected officials, agreed to reexamine the extensive emergency planning that we have done over the past several years in light of the response to Katrina.

This is not the first time that our region has stepped forward together to work on an issue of this magnitude. Certainly the terrorist attacks of September 11th caused significant reexamination of all plans at all levels—State, local, Federal, and regional. What we have done since that date certainly holds up, I think, to the standards that the Congress and the public have put forward. But more needs to be done.

We have put forward a Regional Coordination Plan. We think that is important, as some of the other witnesses have said. Jurisdictions will have to rely on each other in terms of mutual aid, as well as look to State, Federal, and other assets in the event of a catastrophic emergency.

We have also put in place communication mechanisms that allow elected officials, key decisionmakers, and others to communicate on a real-time basis in the event of an emergency. And we have built in redundant capacity to that system, with sites in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia.

Much of this is overseen by a Regional Preparedness Council that is hosted and staffed by the Council of Governments. It has extensive representation not only of local, State, and Federal officials, but the all-important private and non-profit communities as well.

We have excellent relationships at the tri-State level, with the mayor and the two Governors providing tremendous leadership on homeland security in this region, and we are the only region in the country to have a special Federal office within DHS, the Office of National Capital Region Coordination, that is a partner.

How have our plans worked? Certainly in the area of Hurricane Isabel, we fared fairly well. But as has been pointed out in this room previously, the tractor man incident showed the limitations of communication.

Where are we going now for the Council of Governments and for our partners? We found a number of areas where we think there are areas of improvement that are warranted. Certainly, we need to reevaluate the plans to incorporate the lessons of Katrina. Those lessons will unfold in the weeks and months ahead, and we don't want to rush to judgment because more will be found out later as additional information comes forward.

We need to better understand how mutual aid and State and Federal assets are applied to our unique region. We need to first—as some of the other witnesses have talked about—rely on each other first, apply State and Federal aid when it is necessary, and make sure that, as a region, that no one is left behind.

We also need to look at coordinated public information system. I think one of the areas that has been most eroded throughout the country is the ability to communicate quickly and clearly with citizens. It is not going to be enough just to make sure that the decisionmakers are coordinated. We have to make sure that the citizen expectations are out there as well, and that we have provided coordinated information to them.

We also need to examine the needs of special populations. Certainly those individuals that lack public transit are important, but there are a lot of other folks—the elderly and people that may be in universities or visitors to our region. That is going to be very important.

The Council of Governments will accomplish, not by its own, but by working in partnership with State and local governments, the nonprofit and business community sectors, all around one table, sleeves rolled up, working together to make sure that we have the best prepared region in the Nation. The American people expect nothing less. Our citizens and visitors expect nothing less. And our elected officials have tasked this organization, the Council of Governments, with advancing this work program.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Robertson follows:]

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
David J. Robertson, Executive Director

Testimony to the Committee on Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Tom Davis, Chairman

Good morning Chairman Davis and members of the Committee. I am David Robertson, executive director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). Thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing. As you know, COG is an organization of 19 member local governments committed to addressing mutual areas of concern in the region such as transportation, human services and public safety and the environment.

I believe today's hearing will help rebuild public confidence in the ability of government to respond to a wide range of hazards and refocus preparedness and response capabilities as the lessons of Hurricane Katrina unfold. I do not believe a critique at this time in any way minimizes the contributions of first responders, emergency planners and public officials since September 11 to strengthen preparedness and response efforts in the National Capital Region. But we can do more, and we can do better.

My testimony today will focus on both regional achievement and COG's plan to support area local governments and other partners moving forward.

On many levels, we are better prepared, but with more to do.

Personal preparedness is growing in our homes, schools and places of business. Partnerships --- such as those forged by COG --- have brought new ideas and resources to the emergency planning table, formerly the province of only government officials. Business and non-profit involvement has made for better plans and an enhanced response capacity. The region has invested in first responder equipment, new communications technologies, and stepped up training and exercises.

The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina has meant that public officials and our partners need to go back to the drawing board, as the title of this hearing suggests. Katrina does not mean we must abandon the good work to date, but to now evaluate that work against new scenarios and higher standards of preparedness and response.

To that end, yesterday the COG Board of Directors, at the initial request of Montgomery County Executive Doug Duncan and other top elected officials, agreed to "re-tool the extensive emergency planning we have done over the past several years in light of the response to Katrina."

This is not COG's first time to step up to an important regional challenge. Just days after the September 11 terrorist attacks, COG put in place a broad, comprehensive regional emergency planning process that provided the framework for much of the emergency preparedness and response efforts that followed.

Products included a first-of-its-kind Regional Emergency Coordination Plan and the Regional Incident Communications and Coordination System --- also known as the RICCS ---which uses state-of-the-art teleconferencing, e-mailing, and paging systems to ensure seamless communication among key officials.

The RICCS represented a major step forward in the region's ability to communicate in the event of an emergency. The first 24/7 RICCS Host Center was established in the District of Columbia's Emergency

Management Agency, and we now have centers in Montgomery County, Fairfax County and the state emergency agency headquarters Reisterstown, Maryland and Richmond, Virginia.

Coupled with the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan and RICCS, the region held several exercises to test its use against a range of natural and man-made hazard scenarios. All of this was done under the guidance of a public-private panel that would come to be known at the National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council and in partnership with an enhanced state commitment to regional collaboration and the new Office of National Capital Region Coordination.

How have our plans worked? In some cases, such as with Hurricane Isabel, our planning and response efforts largely met the test. Decision-making, asset deployment and emergency response were coordinated across the region. In other instances, such as the infamous "tractor-man" incident coordination and transportation were greater challenges.

Equipment, surveillance and improved communication were top priorities for use of the early rounds of Urban Area Security Initiative funding. These

funds strengthened the capacity of area governments, and in some cases the private sector to respond to a range of natural and man-made disasters. For example, the region's health officials developed an electronic surveillance system to more quickly track the reporting of diseases and symptoms of serious illnesses. The system includes a network to gather data on emergency room visits, over the counter drug sales and clinician outpatient visits.

The region's public information officers developed a virtual Joint Information Center to facilitate communication between their offices during an emergency. The JIC is an Internet portal that allows public information officers to collaborate with each other and elected officials during emergencies to develop messages and coordinate interaction with the news media.

Hundreds of local and state officials and planners participated in a Command Post Exercise in 2004 that used vivid emergency scenarios to test the region's response.

Police and fire officials, using new federal grants for equipment purchases, carefully planned and then purchased a cache of 800 megahertz radios to allow them to communicate on a uniform system. They also purchased new personal protective equipment and additional sets of gear for first responders. We have spent more than $26 million to outfit first responders in the area's 9 major jurisdictions and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority with high-tech gear for emergencies.

Finally, last week the National Capital Region launched a major Citizen Preparedness Campaign to encourage citizens to develop emergency plans for their homes and offices. The campaign's media advertising and outreach efforts at fairs and events around the region began last week.

Past achievements are not enough. COG has been asked to marshal the energy of area officials and other stakeholders to re-evaluate plans to incorporate initial Hurricane Katrina lessons learned. We expect to include in this work a better understanding of how mutual aid, state and federal resources are requested and provided during a regional emergency and advance the development of a coordinated public information system that would provide clear, real-time information on emergency response actions to

residents, businesses and visitors to our region. We also need to address the preparedness and response requirements of special needs populations, including low income and transit-dependent families. This and other work will take place in an environment that is often skeptical of past achievements and questions the impact of the best efforts of government.

Thank you for the opportunity to share a brief summary of achievements and highlight the challenges we now face and will overcome. The response to the September 11 terrorist attacks has re-defined the work of government and the work of COG. On behalf of the COG Board, we look forward to working with the Congress and this committee to ensure that our region is the best prepared in the nation, and in the event of a regional emergency, has the vision and capacity to protect our citizens.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Local governments working together for a better metropolitan region

HOMELAND SECURITY SUMMARY ON NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

Background
The metropolitan Washington region is better prepared today for a terrorist attack or natural disaster, thanks largely to careful planning that began immediately after the tragic events of 9/11. During the planning process, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) made it a priority to unite federal, state and local governments with businesses, transportation and health entities, utility companies, educators and volunteer groups.

The Regional Emergency Coordination Plan (RECP) was approved by the COG Board in September 2002. The RECP is designed around 15 special emergency support function groups (ESFs) such as transportation, fire and rescue, health services, energy, law enforcement and media relations. For each ESF, the plan details procedures for information sharing and response coordination.

The RECP is now considered a model by National Association of Regional Councils.

The regional planning effort paved the way for federal legislation that provides Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funds for local emergency needs. The region has benefited from federal UASI funds from Congress to help purchase much-needed new equipment to better respond to a major emergency.

Emergency Preparedness Council
After the RECP was completed, the COG Board created the National Capital Region Emergency Preparedness Council (EPC) in November 2002 to ensure continued progress in regional homeland security coordination. The EPC evolved from special COG task forces created immediately after 9/11.

RICCS
The Regional Incident Communications and Coordination System (RICCS) is at the heart of the RECP. RICCS uses state-of-the-art teleconferencing, e-mailing, and paging systems to ensure seamless communication among key decision makers. Since being established by the COG Board in February 2002, local officials have relied on the system during major regional events including the sniper shootings and Hurricane Isabel.

800 MHz Radios
The region purchased 1,000 800-megahertz radios to allow first responders to communicate with each other quickly and directly. The radios are stored in Montgomery and Fairfax Counties, available to all NCR jurisdictions during a major emergency or terrorist attack.

Integration of Emergency Operations Centers
Another interoperability priority for the region has been the connection of local jurisdictions' emergency operations centers. Upon completion, the project will provide a regional, interconnected broadband wireless infrastructure. New crisis management software, Web EOC, has been acquired for all jurisdictions.

Personal Protective Equipment
$26.4 million in UASI funds were invested in personal protective equipment to outfit first responders in the area's nine major jurisdictions and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority with high-tech gear for emergencies. The equipment includes backup sets of standard turnout gear, HazMat tech kits and suits, powered air purifying respirators, and self-contained breathing apparatus.

Transport Equipment
The region invested in seven mass casualty support units providing a standardized equipment cache capable of transporting 100 patients at a time and six ambulance patient buses capable of transporting 20 patients. The region's Mobile Air Unit has been showcased as a model for country.

Regional Transportation Coordination Program
In 2004, the region's Transportation Planning Board approved the Regional Emergency Evacuation Transportation Coordination Annex (REETC) of the RECP. The annex is a guide for how the region's transportation agencies will coordinate with one another in regional incidents. It recommends the exploration of a regional transportation coordination program, with enhanced technologies and procedures, like the TRANSCOM organization in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan area. The new federal transportation reauthorization legislation (H.R. 3), enacted in August 2005, includes $1.6 million for a "National Capital Regional Transportation Coordination Program."

Regional Electronic Health Surveillance System
The region's health officials developed an electronic surveillance system to more quickly track the reporting of diseases and symptoms of serious illnesses. The new region-wide system connects pharmacists, hospital emergency rooms, schools, veterinarians, laboratories and emergency medical services.

Virtual JIC
The region's public information officers developed a virtual Joint Information Center (JIC) to facilitate communication between their offices during an emergency. It allows public information officers to collaborate with elected officials, the news media and each other. The JIC exists on a secure, password-protected Internet portal.

Training and Exercises
Since 9/11, first responders, elected officials, and other key area decisions makers in the public and private sector have been active in staging exercises and participating in training sessions in order to be better prepared for major regional emergencies. On September 16, 2004, for example, hundreds of key area officials and planners participated in a Command Post Exercise that used vivid emergency scenarios to test the region's response. Other notable sessions include a crisis communications workshop, communication trainings with health officials and water managers, and a senior leader's seminar.

For more information, please contact David Robertson, COG Executive Director, at 202-962-3260.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you, Mr. Robertson.
Mr. Carper.

STATEMENT OF TONY CARPER, JR.

Mr. CARPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon to you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Waxman and other honorable committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today on this important subject.

I would also like to thank Congressman Shaw for his kind introduction to the committee.

I am the director of emergency management for Broward County, FL. This is a jurisdiction in south Florida composed of the great Fort Lauderdale area. We are a very diverse community of 1.7 million residents and millions more visitors annually.

I have been Director in Broward County since 1993, and before that had 13 years of serving Brevard County, FL. This is over 25 years in dealing with emergencies in my State.

Since 1995, Broward County has declared 14 states of emergency due to hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and wildfires. During emergency situations, our county charter and State statute provide that our mayor and county manager have command and control authority of the situation.

With the resources we have available, local efforts are geared toward holding the line until outside resources arrive. The bottom line is that catastrophic emergencies, whether they be instigated by terrorism or natural events, quickly overwhelm the resources of local and State governments. There is and always will be a requirement for an effective national response system to handle these types of events. However, adequate emergency planning by any local community is vital for the successful utilization of this assistance.

Emergency planning in Broward County is contained in the Broward County Emergency Operations Plan. The plan is based on the principle that local governments bear the initial responsibility for response to any emergency. As a corollary to this principle, each level of government accomplishes the functions for which it is responsible, requesting assistance from the next higher level of government only after resources at that level are clearly inadequate to cope with the effects of the situation.

Florida Statute Chapter 252, the State Emergency Management Act, requires that political subdivisions develop emergency plans which are consistent and coordinated with the emergency planning of State government. This Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan fulfills that requirement and establishes a framework through which governments and agencies of Broward County will prepare for and respond to and recovery from and mitigate the impacts of a major or catastrophic emergency.

The plan is strategically oriented and addresses the operational concepts and responsibilities of coordinated county emergency response, relief, and recovery. The plan describes the basic strategies, assumptions, and mechanisms through which the county governments and agencies will mobilize resources and conduct activities to guide and support their efforts.

This plan is based on certain assumptions and the existence of specific resources and capabilities. Actual measures taken by Broward County to respond to each situation are tailored to each emergency. As such, a great deal of flexibility is built into the implementation of the plan. The bottom line is that our plan establishes the organizational concepts for an effective system of comprehensive emergency management which can respond to any type of emergency.

Our plan makes the following basic assumptions: First, that the concept of operations outlined in this plan assumes that a major catastrophic event has occurred and immediate mobilization of emergency response forces are needed.

The Broward County Emergency Operations Center will be activated and the State Emergency Operations Center will be activated to support our operations.

The Governor of the State of Florida will request activation of the National Response Plan and Federal resources, coordinated through FEMA and the State, will be deployed to effective areas to provide assistance to local governments.

The magnitude of the emergency may be such that effective emergency response and recovery may be beyond the capability of the county and its municipalities. If this is the case, it is assumed that State assistance will be requested. If the situation is beyond the capability of the county and State resources to manage, the Governor will request Federal disaster assistance.

It is assumed that in addition to State and perhaps Federal assistance, prompt and effective emergency response will require mutual aid from other political jurisdictions throughout the State.

One very important assumption—and I can't stress this enough—is that during a major and catastrophic emergency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency will immediately task Department of Defense assets for immediate response for the emergency effort.

During major and catastrophic events, our plan is intended to serve as the basis to provide support and assistance to our communities. It also provides the mechanism to receive and organize State and Federal relief efforts.

The bottom line is that it is imperative that these activities commence immediately and expeditiously.

Finally, we know disasters will strike. No matter how prepared we are, we know people will be hurt. And that means that an ongoing commitment to continually improve response and recovery is very important, and we are committed to doing this.

Thank you very much for the opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Carper follows:]

BROWARD COUNTY AND EMERGENCY PLANNING

Prepared by

Sherman "Tony" Carper, Jr.
Director
Broward Emergency Management Agency

September 15, 2005

Broward County and Emergency Planning

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Waxman and Committee members. My name is Tony Carper. I am the Director of Emergency Management for Broward County, Florida. This is a jurisdiction in South Florida composed of the Greater Fort Lauderdale area. We are a very diverse community of 1.7 million residents and millions more visitors annually.

I have been Director in Broward County since 1993 and before that had 13 years serving in Brevard County, Florida. This is over 25 years dealing with emergencies in Florida. I am the current President of the Florida Governor's Hurricane Conference and on the Board of Directors of the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association and past President of that organization.

Since 1995, Broward County has declared fourteen States of Emergency due to hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and wildfires. During emergency situations our County charter and State statute provide that our Mayor and County Manager have command and control authority of the situation.

With the resources we have available local efforts are geared toward holding the line until outside resources arrive. The bottom line is that catastrophic emergencies whether they be instigated by terrorism or natural events quickly overwhelm the resources of local and state governments. There is and always will be a requirement for an effective national response system to handle these types of events. However, local emergency planning in preparing for and getting this assistance is vital for successful outcomes.

In Broward County this planning is contained in the Broward County Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan. This plan is based on the principle that local governments bear the initial responsibility for response to an emergency. As a corollary to this principle, each level of government accomplishes the functions for which it is responsible requesting assistance from the next higher level of government only after resources at that level are clearly inadequate to cope with the effects of the situation.

Chapter 252, Florida Statutes (State Emergency Management Act), requires that political subdivisions develop emergency plans which are consistent and coordinated with the emergency planning of State government. This Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan fulfills this requirement and establishes a framework through which the governments and agencies of

Broward County will prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impacts of a major or catastrophic emergency which would adversely affect the health, safety and general welfare of its residents.

The plan is strategically oriented and addresses the operational concepts and responsibilities of coordinated County emergency response, relief, and recovery. This plan describes the basic strategies, assumptions and mechanisms through which the County governments and agencies will mobilize resources and conduct activities to guide and support efforts for emergency response and recovery.

To facilitate effective intergovernmental operations, the emergency plan adopts a functional approach that groups emergency response according to roles and responsibilities. Each function is headed by a lead and/or co-lead agency, which has been selected based on its authorities, resources, and capabilities in the functional area. These functional groupings among County, municipal, and other agencies are collectively designated as the Broward Emergency Response Team (BERT) and serve as the primary mechanism through which Broward County governments and agencies will respond to a major or catastrophic emergency. Overall coordination will be provided by the Broward Emergency Management Agency (BEMA) on behalf of the County Administrator and the Broward County Board of County Commissioners under the authority and auspices of this plan.

Those portions of the plan addressing local emergency response capabilities were developed by the respective emergency function subcommittees of the Broward County Emergency Planning Task Force with input from all the appropriate primary and support agencies. The Basic Plan element was developed by the Central Steering Committee for the Task Force and contains input from local government officials and representatives of volunteer agencies. I have the overall responsibility for the development and continued maintenance of this plan and assuring that prompt and effective actions can and will be taken to respond and recover from the effects of a major or catastrophic emergency.

This plan is based on certain assumptions and the existence of specific resources and capabilities which may be subject to frequent change. Actual measures taken by Broward County to respond to each situation will be tailored to each emergency situation. As such, a great deal of flexibility is built into the implementation of this plan.

The plan establishes the organizational concepts for an effective system of comprehensive emergency management.

The purpose of the plan is to:

- Reduce the vulnerability of people and communities of the County to damage, injury, and loss of life and property resulting from major or catastrophic emergencies.

- Prepare for prompt and efficient response and recovery to protect lives and property affected by emergencies.

- Respond to emergencies using all systems, plans and resources necessary to preserve the health, safety and welfare of persons affected by the emergency.

- Recover from emergencies by providing for the rapid and orderly start of restoration and rehabilitation of persons and property affected by emergencies.

- Provide an emergency management system embodying all aspects of pre-emergency preparedness, post-emergency response, recovery, and mitigation.

This plan encompasses the following:

- Describes the various types of events which are considered to be likely to occur.

- Establishes the concepts under which the governments and agencies of Broward County will operate in response to major or catastrophic emergencies by:

    - Defining the responsibilities of each functional area of response.

    - Defining the emergency response organization and structure.

- Establishes the framework for detailed supportive planning by county agencies, municipalities, private and voluntary organizations, and provides for expeditious, effective, and coordinated employment of available resources before, during and after a major or catastrophic emergency.

- Identifies actions required by County and Municipal governments to obtain assistance and relief from the State, quasi-governmental and private organizations, and the federal government.

- Establishes fundamental policies, program strategies and assumptions.
- Establishes a concept of operations spanning the direction and control of an emergency from initial monitoring through post-disaster response and recovery.
- Defines an interagency coordination mechanism to facilitate delivery of immediate assistance, and direction and control of response and recovery resources.
- Assigns specific functional areas of responsibilities to appropriate County and municipal departments and agencies, as well as private sector groups and volunteer organizations.
- Addresses the various types of emergencies which are likely to occur, from minor to major or catastrophic.
- Identifies actions that County response and recovery organizations will take, in coordination with their state and federal counterparts.

In order for a county-wide emergency management plan to be effective, it is imperative that all departments, agencies, divisions and municipalities participate in the development of such a plan. A comprehensive planning process was developed for Broward County's plan which included several steps to ensure participation of all agencies and organizations that would respond to and recover from such events.

Broward County established an emergency planning task force led by an Executive Steering Committee, and comprised of subcommittees which would be aligned functionally with the emergency support functions identified within the State and Federal plans.

The Executive Steering Committee is responsible for the oversight of the plan development and review. The Executive Steering Committee is a management team whose membership consists of senior County executives.

In addition, there is a subcommittee for each function. A designated lead department and primary agency is responsible to the steering committee for its organization's composition and the completion of assigned tasks. Support agencies serving on respective emergency function subcommittees are appointed by the steering committee. The support agencies represent private,

state, municipal, volunteer, county and any other appropriate organizations. Their input and participation in the process is vital to the success of Broward County's plan.

Each emergency function subcommittee has developed an annex which is part of the Broward County Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan. Each emergency function subcommittee reconvenes at least annually to review the plan and suggest appropriate recommendations to the steering committee.

A lead department may be responsible for more than one emergency function; therefore, each department has appointed an emergency coordinator to ensure that all emergency functions are participating in the development and revision processes. The emergency coordinators were trained by BEMA to serve as process consultants and monitors for the steering committee.

A draft of the final plan is distributed to each municipality for review and comment. After the plan is considered complete, the Steering Committee reviews the entire plan and recommends the plan for adoption by the County. This process is also followed for all major revisions and additions.

Emergency Conditions and Assumptions

A major natural, technological or terrorism related emergency will overwhelm the capabilities of Broward County and its municipalities to provide prompt and effective emergency response and emergency short-term recovery measures. Transportation infrastructure may be damaged and local transportation services could be disrupted. There is the potential for widespread damage to commercial telecommunications facilities which would impair the ability of governmental and emergency response agencies to communicate.

Homes, public buildings, and other critical facilities and equipment may be destroyed or severely damaged. Debris may make streets and highways impassable. The movement of emergency supplies and resources could be seriously impeded. Public utilities may be damaged and either fully or partially inoperable. Some county and municipal emergency personnel would be victims of the emergency and prevent them from performing their assigned emergency duties. Numerous separate hazardous conditions and other emergencies as a result of the major event could be anticipated.

Thousands of emergency victims may be forced from their homes and large numbers of dead and injured could be expected. Many victims will be in life-threatening situations requiring immediate rescue and medical care. There

could be shortages of a wide variety of supplies necessary for emergency survival. Hospitals, nursing homes, pharmacies and other health/medical facilities may be severely damaged or destroyed. Medical and health care facilities that remain in operation will be overwhelmed by the number of victims requiring medical attention. Medical supplies and equipment will be in short supply.

Damage to fixed facilities which generate, produce, use, store or dispose of hazardous materials could result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Food processing and distribution capabilities may be severely damaged or destroyed. There could be minimal to total disruption of energy sources and prolonged electric power failure.

Broward County has a population estimated at approximately 1.7 million people. As the second most populated county in Florida, Broward could easily experience a loss of life and property of catastrophic proportion from a series of potential hazards. The following statistical statements are provided relative to the County's vulnerability:

- The concept of operations outlined in this plan assumes that a major or catastrophic emergency has occurred and that the need exists for the immediate activation of this plan and mobilization of emergency response forces and support functions.

- Damage may be extensive and many areas could experience casualties, property loss, disruption of normal life support systems, and loss of economic, physical and social infrastructures.

- The Broward County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be activated and the State Emergency Operations Center (State EOC) may be activated.

- In support of this plan, the primary and support agencies of each emergency support function have developed emergency operations procedures.

- If the emergency is major or catastrophic in nature, it is assumed that the Governor of the State of Florida will request activation of the Federal Response Plan and federal resources, coordinated through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), will be deployed to the affected areas to provide assistance to local governments.

- The magnitude of the emergency may be such that effective emergency response and recovery may be beyond the capability of the County and its municipalities. If this is the case, it is assumed that State assistance will be requested. If the situation is beyond the capability of County and State resources to manage, the Governor will request that federal disaster assistance programs be implemented to supplement local emergency resources to help meet the needs of the areas affected.

- It is assumed that many local emergency response personnel will experience casualties and damage to their homes and personal property and will themselves be victims of the disaster.

- It is assumed that, in addition to state and perhaps federal assistance, prompt and effective emergency response will require mutual aid from other political subdivisions throughout the state and from other states.

- During major and catastrophic emergencies, it is assumed that the Federal Emergency Management Agency will immediately task Department of Defense resources for immediate response to the emergency response and recovery effort.

- It is assumed that citizens and response organizations from other counties and states will send massive amounts of food, clothing and other supplies in response to what they perceive Broward County's needs to be.

- It is assumed that competition among Broward County citizens and communities for scarce resources will be great.

Policies and Execution

Utilizing the concepts of operations expressed within, this plan will be activated based on the scope of a particular emergency situation and the determination by the Mayor, in conjunction with County Administrator, for partial or total mobilization of County emergency government.

The Broward Emergency Management Agency (BEMA) coordinates preparedness aspects of this plan to include information and coordination on a continuous basis. This Agency recommends activation of the plan during threats of emergency, coordinates operational procedures, and implements emergency response actions as might be necessary for the immediate protection of life and property prior to issuance of a Proclamation of a State of

Emergency by the Mayor, or designee in consultation with the County Administrator providing a regular or special meeting of the County Commission when it cannot be practically convened.

During major and catastrophic emergencies, this serves as the basis of relief to our communities and also provides the mechanism to receive and organize State and Federal relief efforts. It is imperative that these activities commence immediately and expeditiously once a request for such assistance has been made.

Finally, we know disasters will strike. No matter how prepared we are, we know people will be hurt. And that means that our ongoing commitment to improving response and recovery is just as important as every other initiative we undertake.

These are our responsibilities. The achievements and gains of the last several years should be continued. It is my belief that State and Local officials, far more than any other, will determine whether this vision for disaster resistance succeeds.

BROWARD COUNTY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

1. **What states of emergency have been declared in your jurisdiction during the last several years?**

   Since 1995, Broward has declared 14 local States of Emergencies.

2. **Who takes immediate operational command over response efforts to emergencies in your jurisdiction?**

   Coordination is by the Broward Emergency Management Agency on behalf of the County Administrator and the Broward County Board of County Commissioners under the authority as outlined in Broward's Emergency Operations Plan.

3. **How do you escalate a state of emergency from local to state to the federal government? Is this escalation criteria defined in your plan?**

   The Broward County Emergency Operations Plan is consistent with the State of Florida Emergency Management Plan and the National Response Plan. The authorities, direction and control and concept of operations are discussed.

4. **Does your plan include details on evacuation procedures? If so, what facilities, transportation, health services and recovery resources are immediately available to your citizens?**

   The plan includes hurricane evacuation plans with established evacuation zones and over 42 designated schools as countywide shelters. Broward County Mass Transit provides transportation. We have a special needs sheltering program and coordinate paratransit needs. Broward has over 300 health care facilities (hospitals, nursing homes, etc.) These facilities must have an emergency management plan that is reviewed and approved by our Agency on an annual basis.

5. **Do you have communications interoperability among all departments and first responders in your jurisdiction?**

   There is a standing committee to address interoperability issues on a countywide basis with Broward's 32 cities.

6. **Does your emergency response plan include arrangements regarding special needs of low income and the elderly?**

   Yes, we have an emergency support function that is called Special Needs and addresses special needs of individuals with disabilities, the elderly, children and low income residents.

7. **Does your plan contain incident management protocols and common standards allowing all responders to understand their roles in an emergency event?**

   Yes, the plan is consistent and addresses the National Incident Management System.

8. **Are the roles of private and volunteer relief organizations defined in your current plan?**

   We have a designated emergency support function for Volunteers and Donations as well as for Business & Industry. These have standard operating procedures for the functions developed by all lead and supporting agencies.

9. **What procedures are contained in your plan for dispersing information to the public during times of emergency?**

   Broward has a designated Public Information emergency support function that disperses info to the public in the event of an emergency. The Broward Call Center is utilized as a rumor control info line with live operators.

10. **In your experience, what federal resources do you find most effective in handling emergencies?**

    Department of Defense and U.S. Coast Guard assets.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you very much, Mr. Carper.

Chief Castillo.

STATEMENT OF CHIEF CARLOS CASTILLO

Mr. CASTILLO. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members. My name is Carlos Castillo. I am the director of the Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management. Thank you for this opportunity to share Miami-Dade County's experience. I am especially proud to present before our own Member of Congress, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

I am joined today by Miami-Dade Police Chief Robert Parker; assistant county manager for public safety, Susanne Torriente; chief of staff to Mayor Carlos Alvarez, Denis Morales; and Eric Olafson from the Board of County Commissioners' Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Miami-Dade County spans over 2,000 square miles, hosts a major airport, Florida's largest seaport, a nuclear power plant, and has a resident population of 2.5 million people. The county has identified 18 potential hazard areas that could impact our community at any time. Therefore, our Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan encompasses an all hazards approach to prepare and protect our community. My comments today will focus on the impact of hurricanes.

We have been recognized as a leader in emergency management from the unified message delivered by our elected officials in times of crisis to our facilities and staff experience. Following Hurricane Katrina's impact, FEMA and State assessment teams remarked how quickly roads were opened, debris was cleared, power was restored, and a preliminary damage assessment process was begun in Miami-Dade. We have had some practice. Last year Miami-Dade County activated its Emergency Operations Center four times for hurricanes in 6 weeks. We have activated for Dennis and Katrina so far this season.

Our foreign and domestic disaster response experiences helped prepared us for Hurricane Andrew in 1992, one of only three Category 5 hurricanes to ever hit the United States. But there was much to learn, and Fire Chief David Paulison made sure that we did. As a county, we were on our own for what seemed like an eternity.

We accepted this reality. We must be prepared to be on our own for the first 24 to 72 hours following a major hurricane. The fact remains that all disasters are local, and long after resources have left, the disaster remains local. This doesn't mean that we don't need assistance for any event that may overwhelm our local resources; clearly, we will.

It is clear that the only way to ensure the prompt, coordinated response our community deserves is to develop preparedness partnerships with governmental agencies, private volunteer organizations, non-profits, and most importantly, our 2.5 million residents. Hurricane preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Clearly, there are different capabilities throughout the country. These differences should be considered when the Federal Government responds to assist.

So what have we learned? One of the successes during Hurricane Andrew was the implementation of the Incident Command System. This enabled us to effectively manage the resources we had and were receiving. We continue to train and expand our use of the National Incident Management System, a proven management tool that has been practiced for many years.

It became apparent during Hurricane Andrew that accurate and timely information flow was not occurring in the manner needed. As a result, Miami-Dade developed the Divisional Emergency Operations Center concept that divides 30 municipalities into a manageable span of control, one of the basic tenets of incident management.

One of the hardest lessons learned was our assumption that by not hearing from parts of the county, they had sustained little or no damage. The reality was that the southern end of Miami-Dade was essentially gone. Out of that came Snapshot, a preliminary damage assessment tool which provides an immediate picture of which areas are most severely affected, allowing us to mobilize resources and focus on more definitive assessments and needs analyses.

Following Andrew, Miami-Dade County took full advantage of the Federal Government's mitigation program. We believe this funding source is critical in preventing disasters. To date, the Miami-Dade Local Mitigation Strategy has completed mitigation projects of approximately $150 million. These include windstorm and flood abatement projects located throughout the county. Following Katrina, which dumped up to 20 inches of rain on Miami-Dade, areas that flooded for days in the past were essentially dry in less than 24 hours. Our Local Mitigation Strategy is used by FEMA and the State of Florida is a model program. Mitigation works.

Without a doubt, much will be learned by communities affected by these recent storms, just as we have from Andrew and others since. The challenge is how to enable areas that have yet to be affected by a major hurricane to learn and improve their capabilities.

Based on our experience, we respectfully offer the following recommendations:

One, an all hazards approach must be utilized in order to prepare as a Nation.

Two, a community hit by a major disaster that overwhelms its capabilities will need assistance as soon as possible to begin the damage assessment process which will lay the foundation for appropriate response and recovery efforts.

Three, the National Incident Management System is important and must be utilized to manage assets both locally and federally, as well as assist in coordinating the humanitarian effort.

And, four, FEMA must be an active partner with local governments in each aspect of emergency management—preparation, response, mitigation, recovery, as well as in training and exercises—while respecting the role and input of local government in a disaster response.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity, and I invite you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, to visit us at the Miami-Dade County Emergency Operations Center. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Castillo follows:]

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform

"Back to the Drawing Board:
A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina"

Thursday, September 15, 2005
10:00 am

Chief Carlos J. Castillo, Director, Miami-Dade Office of Emergency Management
Robert Parker, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department
Susanne M. Torriente, Assistant County Manager for Public Safety

Introduction

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Government Reform Committee. My name is Chief Carlos Castillo, Director of the Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management. Thank you for this opportunity to share Miami-Dade County's experience.

I am joined today by Director Robert Parker, Miami-Dade County Police Chief; Assistant County Manager for Public Safety, Susanne M. Torriente; Chief of Staff to Mayor Carlos Alvarez, Denis Morales; and Eric Olafson from the Board of County Commissioners' Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Miami-Dade County spans over 2,000 square miles, hosts a major airport, Florida's largest seaport and a nuclear power plant and has a resident population of 2.5 million. The County has identified 18 potential hazard areas that could impact our community at any time. This is why our Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan encompasses an all hazards approach to prepare and protect our community. My comments today will focus on the impact of hurricanes.

Both the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the State of Florida recognize Miami-Dade County as a leader in emergency management, from the unified message delivered by our elected officials to our facility and staff experience. Following Hurricane Katrina's impact, FEMA and state teams from other parts of the country remarked how quickly roads were opened, debris was cleared, power was restored and the preliminary damage assessment process was begun. We've had some practice. Last year, Miami-Dade County activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) four times in six weeks for Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne. We have activated for Dennis and Katrina so far this season.

Since 1988, Miami-Dade County has responded together with Fairfax County Fire and Rescue to disasters around the world. Our work with the Federal government to develop the US International Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) response capability was used as the cornerstone for developing FEMA's domestic USAR capability. It was built with input from people like me – practitioners who respond on a daily basis. Miami-Dade has embraced this partnership with the federal government since the early 1990's.

Our foreign and domestic disaster response experiences helped prepare us for Hurricane Andrew in 1992; one of only three Category Five hurricanes to ever hit the US. But there was much to learn.

As a County, we were on our own for what seemed like an eternity. We accepted that this is the reality. We must be prepared to be on our own for the first 24-72 hours following a major hurricane. The fact remains that all disasters are local - and long after resources have left, the disaster remains local. This does not mean that we won't need assistance for an event that may overwhelm local resources.

It is clear that the only way to ensure the prompt, coordinated response our community deserves is to develop preparedness partnerships with governmental agencies, private volunteer organizations, non-profits, and most importantly, our 2.5 million residents. Hurricane preparedness is everyone's responsibility – from individuals locally through all levels of government. Clearly, there are very different capabilities throughout the country. These differences should be considered when the Federal government responds to assist.

What has Miami-Dade County Learned?

Many things went right in Miami-Dade's response to Andrew and we made it a point to build on those successes. We fortified programs that worked and changed or eliminated those that did not. We continue to do so with each emergency exercise or activation.

One of the successes during Hurricane Andrew was the implementation of the Incident Command System. This enabled us to effectively manage the resources we had and were receiving. We continue to train and expand our use of the National Incident Management System, a proven management tool that has been practiced for many years.

It became apparent during Andrew that accurate and timely information flow was not occurring in the manner needed. As a result, Miami-Dade developed the Divisional Emergency Operations Center concept. This divides more than 30 municipalities into a manageable span of control, one of the basic tenets of Incident Management.

One of the hardest lessons learned was our assumption that by not hearing from parts of the county, they had sustained little or no damage. The reality was that the southern end of the county was essentially gone. Out of that came SNAPSHOT, a preliminary damage assessment tool, which provides an immediate, preliminary picture of which areas may be most severely affected, allowing us to mobilize resources and focus on more definitive assessments and needs analyses.

Following Andrew, Miami-Dade County took full advantage of the federal government's mitigation program. We believe this funding source is critical in preventing disasters. To date, the Miami-Dade Local Mitigation Strategy has completed mitigation projects of approximately $150 million. These include windstorm and flood abatement projects located throughout the county. Following Katrina, which dumped up to 20 inches of rain throughout the county, areas that flooded for days in the past were essentially dry in less than 24 hours. Our Local Mitigation Strategy is used by FEMA and the State of Florida as a model program. Mitigation works.

Without a doubt, much will be learned by communities affected by these recent storms, just as we have from Andrew and others since. The Challenge is how to enable areas that have yet to be affected by a major hurricane to learn and improve their capabilities.

Recommendations

Based on our experience internationally, nationally and locally we respectfully offer the following recommendations:

1. An all hazards approach must be utilized in order to be prepared as a nation.
2. A community hit by a major disaster that overwhelms its capabilities will need assistance as soon as possible to begin the damage assessment process, which will lay the foundation for appropriate response and recovery efforts.
3. The National Incident Management System is important and must be utilized to manage assets, both locally and federally, as well as assist in coordinating the humanitarian effort.
4. FEMA must be an active partner with local governments in each aspect of emergency management: preparation, response, mitigation and recovery, as well as training and exercises, while respecting the role and input of local government in disaster response.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity. I invite you, Mr. Chairman, and the Members of the Committee to visit the Miami-Dade County Emergency Operations Center. As in the past, Miami-Dade County is ready to assist in enhancing overall preparedness efforts. My colleagues and I welcome any questions at this time.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Delivering Excellence Every Day

Miami-Dade County, Florida
Carlos Alvarez, *Mayor*

Board of County Commissioners
Joe A. Martinez, *Chairperson*
Dennis C. Moss, *Vice-Chairperson*

Barbara J. Jordan	*District 1*
Dorrin D. Rolle	*District 2*
Barbara Carey-Shuler, Ed.D.	*District 3*
Sally A. Heyman	*District 4*
Bruno A. Barreiro	*District 5*
Rebeca Sosa	*District 6*
Carlos A. Gimenez	*District 7*
Katy Sorenson	*District 8*
Dennis C. Moss	*District 9*
Sen. Javier D. Souto	*District 10*
Joe A. Martinez	*District 11*
José "Pepe" Diaz	*District 12*
Natacha Seijas	*District 13*

Harvey Ruvin, *Clerk of the Circuit and County Courts*
George M. Burgess, *County Manager*
Murray Greenberg, *County Attorney*

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MIAMI-DADE COUNTY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

1. **What states of emergency have been declared in your jurisdiction during the last several years?**
   A Local State of Emergency was declared for:
   1998 – Hurricane Georges
   1999 - Hurricane Irene, Hurricane Floyd, TS Harvey
   2000 - T.S. Leslie (AKA October 3rd Flood)
   2003 - Brownsville tornado
   2004 - Hurricane Charley, Hurricane Frances, Hurricane Jeanne
   2005 - Hurricane Katrina

2. **Who takes immediate operational command over response efforts to emergencies in your jurisdiction?**
   The County Manager is responsible for the overall emergency management function in Miami-Dade County. The Manager may mobilize any or all functional parts of Miami-Dade County government, take special actions and put in place all appropriate regulations that will protect the lives and property of the citizens of Miami-Dade County. (Co. Ord. 8B, Duties of the County Manager).

3. **How do you escalate a state of emergency from local to state to the federal government? Is this escalation criteria defined in your plan?**
   OEM Director recommends to County Manager. The County Manager advises the Mayor. The Mayor makes the request to the Governor. If the governor determines the state will require federal assistance in dealing with an incident or disaster, a request is submitted to FEMA. (Outlined in 44 CFR 206 Subpart B). This is covered in the CEMP under "Disaster Declaration" and roles of the state and federal government.

4. **Does your plan include details on evacuation procedures? If so, what facilities, transportation, health services and recovery resources are immediately available to your citizens?**
   ERF-B, Evacuation & Re-entry Plan - The plan specifically discusses the planning assumptions, assumed risks and procedures involved in evacuations. It discusses how the need for an evacuation is determined, what areas could potentially be effected, what routes are designated as evacuation routes, what transportation services are available for those without their own transportation, and strategies for implementing evacuations.

   Hurricane evacuation centers located at public schools as well as hurricane evacuation buses are activated immediately once an evacuation order is issued. School buses, county buses, special transportation providers, private ambulances and county ambulances assist in the transport of special needs residents to special needs shelters and

hospitals. The American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VOAD) are represented at the Miami-Dade EOC in order to begin providing recovery assistance with help from county agencies as soon as the response phase is completed.

5. **Do you have communications interoperability among all departments and first responders in your jurisdiction?**
   Complete interoperability among all departments and first responders remains a goal. Plans, procedures, and supplemental and improved communication devices have been applied and have improved interoperability greatly.

6. **Does your emergency response plan include arrangements regarding special needs of low income and the elderly?**
   Miami-Dade County maintains a registry of individuals with special needs who require assistance when evacuating and coordinate an evacuation plan to move these individuals to specialized evacuation centers. The **Emergency Evacuation Assistance Program** (EEAP) arranges for transportation to specialized shelters for pre-registered individuals and a limited amount of late registrants. Registrants may be assigned to a Special Needs Evacuation Center or a medical facility depending on their medical needs and health conditions. Registrants that are electrically dependent, bed-bound or use oxygen equipment are assigned to hospitals or nursing homes that participate in the **Medical Management Facilities (MMF) Program**.

   The CEMP sets forth procedures to create an **Unmet Needs Committee**. The committee brings together county agencies, faith-based organizations and non-profit social service agencies to organize, identify and resolve emergency and long-term disaster-related needs. Unmet needs may include sheltering, feeding, bulk distribution of supplies, debris removal around a home, medical and mental health concerns, and temporary housing.

   The Residential Shuttering Program—free shutters for low-income elderly residents. Those who identify their need also have people come to their home when a storm is approaching, to install the panels if the residents themselves cannot.

7. **Does your plan contain incident management protocols and common standards allowing all responders to understand their roles in an emergency event?**
   The management model followed by the Miami-Dade Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is based on the principles of the Incident Command System (ICS). The NIMS/ICS principles have been incorporated and institutionalized into the County's response management

model as illustrated throughout the CEMP and in the policies and procedures of the County's response agencies.

8. **Are the roles of private and volunteer relief organizations defined in your current plan?**
   Several private businesses (Florida Power and Light, BellSouth, TECO, City Gas) and non-profit organizations (Salvation Army, American Red Cross, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster – VOAD, Crisis Response Mental Health Team) have defined roles in numerous emergency support functions including communication, energy, mass care and special needs.

   From a logistics standpoint, private organizations (United Way, Hands on Miami) are given the lead on the management of spontaneous volunteers and donations, including management of volunteer reception agencies. They also support resource management.

9. **What procedures are contained in your plan for dispersing information to the public during times of emergency?**
   ESF 14 – Public Information focuses on the preparation, coordination, and dissemination information regarding major emergencies and disasters to the general public through various forms of media and provides a central point of contact for the media to release accurate information on a timely manner.

   One of the principal roles of the IC is to act as the unified spokesperson for the emergency. Regular briefings are delivered to the media and a formal PIO and Communications function is activated to respond to additional requests from the media. A 24 hour rumor control hotline is activated, with call takers accommodating residents in our 3 principal languages and also for the deaf and hearing impaired. Through this hotline, callers are given up to date, accurate information. We track the topics of these calls in order to identify current areas of particular public interest, giving us an additional tool to assess what topics need to be addressed in press releases and press conferences. An emergency activation website is activated and updates are made 24 hours a day during the emergency.

10. **In your experience, what federal resources do you find most effective in handling emergencies?**
    The equipment, expertise, capabilities and manpower provided by FEMA, the Army Corps of Engineers and other military branches are critical to restoring infrastructure and order after a major disaster.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman.

We have the honorable Marc Morial, who is the former mayor of New Orleans. Mayor, we are going to swear you in quickly, we are going to get your statement, and then we will allow you to give your statement.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you so much, Mayor. Mayor, hopefully the chairman will be back to ask the questions once you have given your statement. Why don't you give your statement?

STATEMENT OF MARC MORIAL

Mayor MORIAL. Thank you very much, and thank you for the opportunity to share with you and also the chance to be with all of these distinguished panelists.

I want to offer a few thoughts, not having had the opportunity to hear the previous testimony, but certainly want to compliment the committee for its responsibility and its interest in both disaster preparedness and disaster response, which are two components of a very important subject.

I do want to say that Katrina is an event of tragic, epic, and, in my own view, biblical proportions. We now have 1 million Americans who are displaced. Those Americans are not all poor, they are not all rich, they are not all middle income, they are not all Black, not all White; they are Americans of every hue and class who have been displaced.

The pictures that we all saw in the press and on television were of the most disadvantaged Americans, the most disadvantaged New Orleaneans who didn't evacuate because many couldn't evacuate. And we saw their suffering and we were affected by their suffering.

And I personally felt the emotions of sadness and anger, befuddlement and betrayal, courage and hope, because I had a chance to go to Houston and spend time with those who have been sheltered there and hear stories of personal courage, of rescue, of survival through many, many difficult, difficult days down in New Orleans.

I want to offer several thoughts, some on disaster preparation and preparedness, and others on Katrina specifically. And we have been framing—and I shared this with the Senate Committee on Homeland Security yesterday—our thinking around the idea of the Katrina victims and survivors, that they need a bill of rights. The first component of that would be a victims compensation fund.

And I want to let you know that so much of my thinking and our thinking around this has been governed by the standard that the Nation set after September 11th. One of the great moments in American history was the response of this Nation after a great and horrific tragedy.

In that case, the Congress created a Victims Compensation Fund at the same time it provided financial relief to the airlines in the same legislative instrument. And that compensation fund was designed to compensate the victims. All tolled, after September 11th, it paid out $7 billion to a variety of classes of victims. I think in this regard we should strongly, strongly enact a victims compensation fund.

Second, I do know that there has been considerable debate and difference of opinion on how to examine the many things that went wrong. It is clear that a lot went wrong. The mistakes and the fumbles have cost people lives. They have cost the massive destruction of infrastructure and property. State, city, and Federal officials, in my own view, all made mistakes. What they were, the specifics of what occurred in the first 3 to 4 days after Katrina can only be reconstructed, evaluated, and examined in a fashion that will give us lessons.

I believe as if, while the Congress does conduct its oversight responsibilities, that there be an independent commission like the 9/11 Commission, and here is why. Disaster preparedness and response is a weighty science. Simply because you are a good manager, administrator, or leader doesn't mean you know disaster response or disaster preparedness.

Because of the magnitude of this, because hurricane season comes every year, because manmade and natural disasters are something we have to live with everyday, I think that the responsibility that the leaders of this Nation have to the people of this Nation can only be fulfilled if it is crystal clear the lessons that need to be learned; not just assign responsibility and blame, but to fix, to reform, to strengthen, to improve the system of disaster preparedness and disaster response, which is a sophisticated science with people who are experts in the field. So I believe that process would be augmented, would be helped if there were in fact an independent commission that looked at it.

With respect to FEMA, one thing I think is quite clear with respect to FEMA—and then I will talk more specifically about Katrina—is that I think that Congress should consider writing the statutory qualifications for the Director of FEMA and the senior leadership of FEMA into the statute. We would never consider a non-lawyer to be attorney general, a non-doctor to be surgeon general. We should never even consider a non-expert in disaster preparedness and response for being the Director of FEMA. And Congress can ensure that by creating some statutory qualifications.

Final point on sort of rebuilding and going forward is the serious need for there to be—there has been talk of a czar, some centralized authority. But there is a need for some centralized authority to coordinate and oversee, I think, the rebuilding, because this is going to be a massive undertaking by this Nation. So I would like to ask, Mr. Chairman and members, that I be given an opportunity to supplement the record with written remarks which I have not completed preparing. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Morial follows:]

Testimony of Marc H. Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League
Before the House Committee on Government Reform

"Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina"
Thursday, September 15, 2005

Chairman Davis, Congressman Waxman, esteemed members of this Committee – I am honored to have this opportunity to share with you my thoughts today.

As you know, the National Urban League is the oldest community-based civil rights and direct service organization in the country. Through our 102 professionally-staffed affiliates, located in 35 states and in the District of Columbia, the National Urban League works to ensure, in a non-partisan way, economic and social parity and full civil rights for African-Americans and other people of color. I come to you today, not only as the president of this great organization, but also as the former mayor of the great city of New Orleans, the city I served from 1994 until 2002.

Until two weeks ago, few Americans could have imagined the disaster that has befallen the rural areas, the towns and villages and three of the major cities of the Gulf region.

And even fewer, I suspect, could have imagined the harrowing conditions that many endured in its aftermath throughout the area and especially in New Orleans.

But the news reports of the toll taken—and, it must be said, those that have shown Coast Guard officers and other military personnel, beleaguered police officers, and private citizens acting heroically in the face of great danger—have provoked multitudes in the U.S. and abroad to prove once again that a profound reservoir of human kindness binds human beings together far more tightly than we often otherwise acknowledge.

I saw that quality—an entire community expressing its solidarity with the victims of Hurricane Katrina—on wondrous display for myself while visiting Houston, Texas last week. I was there visiting the Astrodome, Reliant and Convention Centers, where thousands of evacuees are being housed, with Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama, Representatives Sheila Jackson-Lee and Al Green, Mrs. Barbara Bush, Governor Rick Perry, and Houston Mayor Bill White.

I was there to support former Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton who had been asked by President Bush to organize the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund to aid the evacuees. I was also there to listen to, comfort and support thousands of my former neighbors and constituents who had been through such an unspeakable ordeal and so desperately need our government's help to rebuild their lives.

All of our Urban League affiliates have mobilized to help direct resources to stricken Gulf communities and to aid evacuees coming their way. Led by our Houston affiliate, the Urban League movement has been in the forefront of the effort to find evacuees housing, jobs and other needed services.

We have much work to do to help get people back on their feet and to rebuild the Gulf region. I look forward to working with you in the coming weeks, months and years to address these issues.

As we move forward, however, it is also necessary to look back, to figure out what went wrong and to make sure that nothing like this ever happens again.

While I appreciate your efforts to begin looking at these issues, Mr. Chairman, I strongly believe that there must be an independent national commission to study what went wrong with the early-warning system and relief effort and identify how best to protect not just New Orleans but also other cities and regions from such natural catastrophes in the future.

One are of particular concern to all of us is the fact that so many people, mostly our neighbors and friends without means. were left behind. We as a country are better than that. Any preparedness plans must take into account that many of our citizens cannot just load up the car, gas up and go to a safer location.

As you consider disaster preparedness plans, I urge you to do all you can to ensure that, moving forward, such plans take into account the needs of ALL of the residents of a community.

It is also important to take into account that, in some instances, long-term evacuation is necessary. We must plan for residents to go to other cities and cities must be prepared to temporarily house displaced persons for extended periods of time.

Chairman TOM DAVIS [presiding]. Mayor, thanks a lot for being here. I know you are on a very tight schedule, and Members are just trickling in from votes. But we very much appreciate your being here.

Mayor MORIAL. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. As you look at this from afar, and from your perspective as head of the Urban League, what is your impression? Just off the top? We will have weeks of excruciating hearings and detail on this.

Mayor MORIAL. I think the most important thing is to keep the focus on the people who are displaced. The people who are displaced are traumatized. And when I say that, they run from a person who may have lost a considerable business with 3,000 employees to a person at the other end of the spectrum who may have been a renter, may have been unemployed or may have been in an entry-level position, to high school seniors who now face the prospect of not seeing their classmates and not graduating with their high school class at the school that they have attended for the last 3 years.

There has to be a continuing focus on how we can help people rebuild their lives, understanding that a return to normalcy is not going to be immediate; it may not even be intermediate. It may take a long time for many, many people; not only in Louisiana, but in Waveland and Gulfport, in Biloxi and Bay St. Louis, those cities in Mississippi that were completely obliterated, not to mention the New Orleans region and southeastern Louisiana.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Obviously, the city had plans going back to your day, FEMA had plans, they had drilled on these. And the implementation at the end, do you think part of it was that the storm was more severe than probably people anticipated? People did not get out of the way that might have been able to leave. Any impressions?

Mayor MORIAL. Well, this would be the observation. I mean the kind of framework, the inquiry, there has to be a look at the plans, but then there has to be a careful look at the execution and the implementation. What happened? Was there a central command structure? Was there a central communications system? And then also, and I think everyone who has been involved in disaster preparedness and response knows, in every case you must be able to make battlefield adjustments. Sometimes those adjustments are difficult to make, sometimes they are easy to make.

And in my mind, it is the reconstruction of the events. Because to ask what in fact happened, what was the responsibility, and to whose responsibility fell the management of the shelters of last resort, what was triggered in the minds of Federal, State, and local officials when the levees broke, knowing that all the computer simulations indicated that if levees broke you had a second type of catastrophe, I think there has to be a careful, dispassionate reconstruction not only to look at the plans, but to look at the execution of the plans and to query whether battlefield adjustments may have been made at the Federal, State, and local levels.

There seems to have been a breakdown in communications, the city had a mobile command center and I question whether it was utilized. There are a whole series of things. And I think reconstruc-

tion of the events is a very important part of this process to determine whether the plans were sufficient, but also, if the plans were sufficient, whether there was execution.

Let me give you a case in point. After Georges in 1998, when I was Mayor, first time the city had to be evacuated, we realized that the city's emergency preparedness plan had a deficiency in that there were no provisions for "special needs" persons—persons in hospitals, in nursing homes. So there was an effort to modify and improve the plan that began in my administration, which ended better than 3 years ago, to do something for special needs.

Second, working with the State, there were two problems with the evacuation. One was the capacity of the highways. That was corrected by creating a contraflow, where both sides of the highways went north. And second, there was an underpass in New Orleans that very easily flooded which would block access, and a new pumping station was built, which began sometime in 1998–1999, to try to alleviate that problem. There were post-Georges modifications to the emergency preparedness, the sort of readiness state that took place at the city and State level. I do not know what continued after 2002. I understand there were simulations, there was a Hurricane Pam exercise.

I think the committee and the public have to reconstruct all of that to see if the plans were adequate, one, but then second, whether the execution of the plan, in fact, met the standards of the plan.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Panelists, we are going to get to your questions. I think the Mayor has just got a few minutes here. We are going to try to grill him for a couple of minutes, and let him get on his way. Then we will get back to some of the issues that you have raised.

Mr. Waxman.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor MORIAL. Congressman, good afternoon.

Mr. WAXMAN. Thank you. Good to see you. Thank you for being here.

Mayor MORIAL. Thank you.

Mr. WAXMAN. I am going to ask the other members of the panel to respond to this question, but I want to ask your view of it. It seems to me that Hurricane Katrina was the first big test of our disaster preparedness and response capability since September 11th. Clearly, the Federal Government failed this test. There were also failures at other levels of government.

This is not just my opinion, it is the opinion of that Commission that was set up to look at September 11th. The Chair of that Commission, Tom Keane said, "This is not a terrorist incident, but it brings into play all of the same issues and shortcomings. What makes you so mad is it is the same things we saw on September 11th. Whoever is responsible for acting in these places has not acted. Are they going to do it now? What else has to happen for people to act?"

Now, Mr. Keane's essential point is that when it comes to preparedness and response, it does not matter whether we are dealing with a terrorist attack or a natural disaster, we are just not ready. Do you agree with that?

Mayor MORIAL. Based on what I saw in Katrina, it is clear we were not ready for a natural disaster of the type of Katrina. So much went wrong. So many people suffered. It has been a very, very difficult time for the country.

But it has been especially difficult for people who call New Orleans home, to see our friends and family members and neighbors in awful conditions or displaced in communities that they are unfamiliar with, some maybe displaced in a person's home. It is hard for me to respond to the question with respect to our readiness for terrorism. All I can say is I sure hope that we are ready, and the public needs to be able to trust that the leadership of this Nation is ready.

Mr. WAXMAN. Well, when it came to Katrina we had some notice. We had at least several days notice that the storm was coming. A year before, FEMA had a report that indicated that if a hurricane of this magnitude hit New Orleans it could do exactly what it did do—drive a million people out of their homes and bring about such enormous disaster. We would not have notice with a terrorist attack.

Mayor MORIAL. That is correct.

Mr. WAXMAN. A lot of people, and I certainly include myself, are very critical of the Federal Government response. Many people are also critical of the local response. You were the mayor. Are you critical of that local response? Do you think the city——

Mayor MORIAL. I am critical of the local, State, and Federal response. You know, these responses to be effective have to be seamless and coordinated. We do not know what went on behind the scenes. There are press reports that are trickling out about what went on and what did not go on behind the scenes. And I have heard some things anecdotally through hearsay about what did not go on behind the scenes in those immediate days. And yes, I think——

Mr. WAXMAN. Well, if you had been mayor and you had to deal with that kind of terrible tragedy, would you believe that your local people were equipped for it without the support from FEMA?

Mayor MORIAL. You had to have FEMA support at a point, particularly in the post-Katrina response. Because once it got to a situation of needing both supplies and rescue, rescue with helicopters, rescue with amphibious boats, neither the city nor the State have that equipment, nor have they ever had the resources to buy that equipment.

The city and its local agencies might own a handful of boats, no helicopters, no trained search and rescue people to do the kind of search and rescue necessary. So FEMA and the Federal Government's involvement post-Katrina, when the situation exacerbated, was essential.

The other thing is the Federal Government's assistance in providing supplies, food and water, after an immediate period of 24 to 48 hours, perhaps. Because I would think that the Astrodome would have sufficient food onsite to be able to accommodate people, I know in 1998 it did, for 24 to 48 hours. After that, there was a need for military supplies in order to be able to take care of people.

Mr. WAXMAN. Let me ask you one question, because my time is up, but just one question that will take a really brief answer. Be-

fore we learn the lessons of Katrina to apply to L.A. and Miami, New York, and other places around the country, do you not think we need to do a more thorough investigation of what went right, what went wrong at all levels when it came to Katrina?

Mayor MORIAL. I have testified before this committee, the Senate Homeland Security Committee, and I think I have been on record asking the Congress to create a bi/multipartisan independent commission like 9/11 that can operate in conjunction with appropriate congressional hearings.

I think it requires the involvement of a fairly significant body of experts who understand and know disaster preparedness and response to avail the expertise of citizens outside of the Congress to work with the Congress on a process like this.

I mean, there have been many commissions. The 9/11 Commission was all private citizens. I believe the Warren Commission included public officials, Members of Congress, I know T. Hale Boggs was on the Warren commission and he represented New Orleans in Congress for a long time.

There are many ways to create it, but we need a dispassionate, careful look with recommendations, with a commitment I think from Congress and the executive branch that whatever those recommendations may be, we are going to implement them very, very quickly, as long as they are sensible.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mayor, how much time do you have?

Mayor MORIAL. I have to go do a conference call. I do not know how long you all will be. I will be happy to come back.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. OK. If you need to go, we will dismiss you. We will be here for a while, if you have an opportunity.

Mayor MORIAL. Thank you for the opportunity.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you for your comments.

We are going to go back to the questions for the full panel at this point. Has everybody had an opportunity to testify? OK. We appreciate that. I was not here for all of it because I was voting, but I did read everything last night in preparation for the hearing.

Let me just ask kind of a hypothetical question. If a terrorist sets off a bomb at one of your major sports arenas during a full house event in your jurisdiction, it is early rush hour, you have an international diplomatic conference you are hosting near the arena, you have demonstrators picketing that event, you have unknown chemicals, what is the plan? Just briefly, what is the plan in L.A.?

Mr. STANLEY. That sounds like an everyday event in Los Angeles. [Laughter.]

With the exception of the bomb, we have those major incidents going on all the time. And when we have major incidents and those things that we know about, we are able to pre-plan, we are able to stage up, we are able to have our emergency operations center very active, we are able to put our contingency plans in place beforehand, and able to monitor the incident.

The incident that you describe would give us that lead time and we would have the resources of not only having the city of Los Angeles, the greater resources of the L.A. County, the Sheriff's department, police, the State resources that come to bear with the military and all the other State assets, as well as the incident you de-

scribe would bring in Federal support from the FBI, from FEMA, from Secret Service and those things. So we would do that.

Part of that pre-planning is to make those people aware that surround that area that this event is going on to properly equip them with information, let them know what is going on and what the actions should be if we have some major event there. Again, that is one of the lessons I think Katrina is going to bring to us very vividly, and that is how to speak with the power to influence human behavior when we have these major events so that we reduce the panic, we reduce the angst of "I do not know what is happening. I do not know what my government is doing. I do not know what even they are supposed to be doing."

So those are the things in the event that you describe. We would have good pre-planning, good resources, hospitals on alert, knowing where all the resources would come from, knowing where the victims would go and able to track those victims, and being able to get good, quick public information out so that we can reduce the panic in the surrounding area.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. In the case of L.A. too, the earthquake is kind of the worst case scenario, is it not?

Mr. STANLEY. Earthquake right now is still our best seller. We do not know when they are going to come, but we know that we can have a very large incident. And we do planning. Our technology has increased so we can use the technology to know where the worst case incidents will occur even before the calls come in, and in most cases the phones are down, so we can start sending resources and assets to those areas.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Bobb, Mr. Robertson, what about the District?

Mr. BOBB. Obviously, there would be a lot of panic. Our first responders would go into service immediately. Our emergency operations centers will go into operations immediately. We had a similar event happen during the IMF World Bank protest where we had to evacuate RFK Stadium, and we were ready for that incident when it occurred.

But we believe that we would be ready, we would have our emergency centers in operation, our first responders would be on the scene, we would have good communication, we would activate our entire Emergency Management Plan, we would communicate with our public, and we would bring in all of the Federal agencies that would be at the ready. So we would be in contact with our partners throughout the National Capital Region.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I think the thing that concerns us the most looking at the New Orleans situation, who is in charge? I mean, at that point, no one was sure who was in charge of what at that point. In the case of the city in a situation like that, does it become Federalized quickly? Do your local partners chip in?

I just think of the incident here in D.C. in March 2003, regarding the tobacco farmer, Dwight Watson, AKA "Tractor Man," when we left the Park Service in charge and it was in my opinion a disaster, where one guy driving a tractor on the Mall brought the city to its knees for a day and a half. You never want to have a recurrence of that. The command and control is very critical. How is that set up at this point?

Mr. BOBB. The way it is set up in the District, clearly the Mayor of the District of Columbia is in charge. There is just no question as to——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. But on a Federal enclave, he was not. I know in the case of "Tractor Man" he was out of the loop, unfortunately.

Mr. BOBB. When it becomes a Federal issue, and we work with Federal agencies all the time, then if it is a terrorism threat, something of that nature, then the FBI. So we have a list of protocols. But we are the first line of defense and so the Mayor initially is in charge and then will make the switch-over.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Robertson, are we coordinated with all the local jurisdictions in terms of the first responders, bridge access, and everything else?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Certainly. In that scenario that you pointed out, the District of Columbia, as Mr. Bobb said, would be the Incident Commander but there would quickly be alerts that would go out for transportation impacts, any health impacts, emergency response impacts, a fair amount of extensive coordination, conference calling, to make sure decisionmakers were making the best local decisions but in a regional context.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. And you have military bases nearby as well for additional troops, something New Orleans did not have, that is readily available.

Mr. ROBERTSON. Right.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Carper.

Mr. CARPER. Yes, sir. The scenario the Chair outlines is one that I think our plan is geared to address. One of the points I tried to make in my testimony is the plan needs to be strategic and that it must identify the organizational concepts, the command and lines of authority, and those types of things to address any situation, no matter if it is the bombing scenario or a hurricane or anything else.

Certainly, another point I think that needs to be made is that the scenario that the chairman outlines would be something that would quickly be a national incident and would probably need national resources and State resources as well to support the actions of local government. But the local government would be there and should have planning in place to handle the consequence management of the event, handle the victims, and handle the support of fire fighters, and law enforcement that are going to the scene, and be able to manage and organize that. Those systems have to be in place in order to be successful in any emergency.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. And you have had a fair amount of experience down there in the Broward-Dade area.

Mr. CARPER. Yes, sir.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mr. Castillo.

Mr. CASTILLO. Yes, sir. I would like to add to what my colleague said and also add that for us we enjoy an excellent relationship in south Florida with our counterparts, with Tony, with the different departments, police and fire rescue and other departments that would be involved in something like this. What you described is a planned event, except for the bomb, of course, but it is a planned event.

So that creates a heightened sense of awareness for us, but also we try to clearly delineate roles and responsibilities in a unified command scenario where at the lowest appropriate level command and control would be elevated as needed, thinking ahead of time. And as was said, in something like this, it would definitely require outside assistance.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Let me ask each of you, how good is your communication with the Federal Government on terrorist intelligence?

Ms. PERETT. I think we have an excellent communication. In Los Angeles County, we have the Terrorism Early Warning Group. It was established quite a bit before the events of September 11th. It is multidisciplinary, and although it is chaired by the sheriff, it has representation from the FBI, LAPD, and many others. They have been working long and hard and have wonderful connections in terms of their ability to rapidly get information and basically vet it, assess it, and let the rest of us know what they believe is important for us to know in terms of our reaction.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. OK. Mr. Bobb.

Mr. BOBB. I would say in the National Capital Region and in the District of Columbia, in particular, our relationship on intelligence information, is very good, our working relationship with the Federal authorities in that regard.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. OK.

Mr. CARPER. We have excellent ties to the Federal intelligence system. In fact, the person in charge of that within our county is a former special agent in charge for the Federal Bureau of Investigation and he certainly has a network, the lines of communication to keep us up to date in those issues.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Go ahead.

Mr. CASTILLO. For us, we are part of the Joint Terrorism Task Force with representation local and Federal as well, and the Miami-Dade Police Department has a lead role in that for us as well.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. OK. Thank you.

Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question first off about real-time exercises. Every jurisdiction in the country, beginning with the Federal Government, has paper plans up the kazoo, as they say, and there are groups and task forces of Federal and local and State officials and everybody looks like they have done their homework. I am not talking about you, I am talking about everywhere in the country. Every time there has been anything even approaching an incident, I have seen no indication that all of this paperwork amounts to something happening on the ground. I will give you an example.

In this region, you remember out in Virginia when there was a scare involving anthrax and there was total confusion. We remember when the first plan flew over and there was very little coordination between the District and Homeland Security. To its credit, the District tried something that I have never heard of in any large city, and I want to know from each of you if you have tried anything like this.

The District, on I believe it was July 4th, tried literally an evacuation plan involving cars, I think, as it was supposed to, and the use of lights in the street. It did not work as well as the District would have liked. And there are lots of ways it could be improved.

But I gave the city credit for doing a real-time exercise involving an entire city when it was crowded on July 4th when everybody comes here. I would like to know if any of you have done any real-time exercises to see if any of these paper plans amount to anything more than a bunch of paper plans.

Ms. PERETT. If I may. It was not an entire city, but a number of years ago we did do a large earthquake exercise that included an evacuation component. The city of Torrence cooperated and had probably about eight blocks of the city evacuated as part of that exercise.

I also wanted to mention, with the question that the chairman asked a moment ago, just last November we coordinated a major dirty bomb exercise at the Forum and brought together over 500 first responders plus about 700 volunteers who played the disaster victims in the Forum, and it involved multiple agency response. So we do do very large scale evacuation throughout the county on an annual basis.

Mr. STANLEY. I would like to add, too, from the city of Los Angeles' perspective, we are doing exercises all the time. You are exactly right, the plan is a requirement, but unless you exercise that plan it really means nothing until you have put it in effect to see if there are any holes. And the key to that is to have time to go back and address those holes and gaps. And there is nothing wrong with the plan falling on its face, that is where you want it to fall on its face is during an exercise so that you can fix it.

We just had an exercise this weekend with the sign language folks so that they could be integrated well into the process and know their roles and responsibilities. We have one coming up very shortly on anthrax and how we move people, and this will be getting the people involved to move them through a process of giving them prophylactics. We have not tried to evacuate a 500 square mile, 4 million population as a full-scale exercise, but we are doing now neighborhood plans. We are working with our neighborhoods to get them involved and we are doing different full-scale exercises in the neighborhoods.

Mr. BOBB. Yes. We conduct a number of exercises in the National Capital Region, table top exercises, which are coordinated through our Homeland Security advisor's office. Just 3 weeks ago, we exercised against the National Response Plan and that exercise was conducted with the Department of Defense, the FBI, local authorities, and the exercise centered around a terrorist incident involving the potential for radiological as well as a dirty bomb.

So we have the plans in place and we do exercise against those plans. We have not yet exercised against, other than the one exercise of July 4th of last year, this year with respect to mass evacuation of the city. In our most recent discussions, we are now, as a result of Katrina, we are now looking at other ways in which we can broaden the exercises that we are doing against our own internal plan as well as the National Capital plans.

Ms. NORTON. Does anyone else have anything to say on real-time exercises? Yes, sir, Chief Castillo?

Mr. CASTILLO. Yes, ma'am, if I can. We have conducted several full-scale exercises, not just within our jurisdiction but on a regional basis that have task forces that have been established throughout Florida through our regions, including the county's administrative building.

But I want to point out, we have planned for evacuation, and for an emergency manager that is clearly the toughest decision to recommend because for hurricanes, if you make the decision too early, then the storm may turn off and the next time that you ask for an evacuation many people will not leave, but if you wait too long, it is impossible to get everyone out safely.

And that is something that is only realistically tested in an actual situation. Unfortunately, we had that opportunity last year with two of the activations that we had of the Emergency Operations Center.

Mr. SHAYS [presiding]. The gentlelady has another 30 seconds we will extend her. She has been here so long and this is her area. We will then go to Mr. Gutknecht. Thirty seconds.

Ms. NORTON. The emphasis, Mr. Chairman, on evacuation is understandable. It also worries me a lot that we may be fighting the last war. When I said D.C. tried to evacuate, people were in the city. It was not trying to evacuate people who lived here. It was the people who come for July 4th.

It seems to me that the situation we had in Katrina is so atypical that is not even the best word for it, and that in most instances, particularly even a terrorist attack, you are not trying to get everybody out of Dodge, as they say, and that the opposite may be the problem, that you want people to stay in place and they think, particularly looking at Katrina, everybody should up and run.

I am very worried about all this talk about evacuation. For example, the District is now trying to see what would happen if there were an evacuation and so forth. But to where? I mean, can you imagine with everybody who gets on the road now, because so many people come in, two or three times our population, trying to get out, then you add to that 600,000 people who live here to get out.

I wonder what you think about evacuation in the first place, particularly since for the most part will we really be talking about something that takes a whole city down, like a flood that comes out of Noah's ark, or are we not far more likely, particularly if it is a terrorist incident, to be talking about a targeted incident on only one part of the city where evacuation is necessary?

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. I think that is a question that some of you may answer later to other questions as well.

At this time we will recognize Mr. Gutknecht. He has the floor.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the witnesses for being here today. These are issues I think we are going to have to sift through over a long period of time. I would just maybe start out, and I mean this in a sense of fairness, I think these exercises, just pursuing what the gentlelady from Washington, DC, just raised, that is, I think it is good to have the plans, I think it is good to have the exercises.

But have you ever put your exercises to the test either in actuality or even computer modeled it in a situation where all of the telecommunications was down, where there was no electricity, where none of the public services were working, when many of the rescue people themselves could not—I mean, you put all of that in play and I wonder how any city would respond to something like this. In the exercises you have done, have you done this without the use of telecommunications?

Ms. PERETT. Sir, we did it quite some time ago, not to the scale that we do exercises now. It has been a very long time since we have basically tried to do what I would call a manual operation. But I would like to go back to the Incident Command System and the Standardized Emergency Management System. Those are such well-defined response structures with such common terminology and protocol that it will serve somebody well out in the field and they will be able to operate as a component under the Incident Command System and do their job. And that can be going on in many places when you have a well-defined and orchestrated system in place. So although I think you presented huge challenges for us with your very question, I do believe it is possible to function, each cell, so to speak, being independent until such time as they can be brought together.

Mr. STANLEY. Sir, if you noticed the TV this week, we did that exercise earlier this week when we lost all power in the city of Los Angeles. We only lost it briefly, we only lost it for an hour, and we actually had our Emergency Operations Center activated as we were dealing with a resettlement plan for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. But it did allow us to assess whether our backup generation power worked, where we might need additional backup generation, how the communication elements played, how the 4,000-plus traffic lights in the city interacted, those that were automatic, those that had to be dealt with manually, etc., at a time when we were in a position to do a very good assessment and then go back now and see what we need to do to fill those gaps.

Mr. BOBB. We had a large-scale exercise in the National Capital Region several months ago that took down the entire transportation system. So we did exercise a worst case scenario with respect to our transportation system. We have not conducted an exercise wherein all of our power, etc. would be out. But what we have done on the communications side is we have purchased throughout the region large caches of radios, interoperable radios for our first responders so that we would be able to communicate in the event the telephone, other communications systems are down.

Mr. ROBERTSON. One additional point is that the RICS communication system that we use to support our decisionmakers in this region has a built-in redundancy in that we not only have facilities in the District, but in Fairfax County, VA, Montgomery County, MD, the Maryland State Emergency Agency in Reisterstown, MD, and then the Virginia Emergency Management Agency in Virginia. So that if there were an emergency or incident that took one or any down, there is going to be that backup capacity to make sure that you do not lack the key decisionmaking communication at a time when it is most needed.

Mr. CARPER. That type of scenario that you outline is something that we faced repeatedly last year in Florida during all the hurricanes. During Hurricane Frances, for instances, we had an evacuation for over 300,000 people just in Broward County alone and there were over 500,000 people without power, our telecommunications systems were severely impacted and we had to provide work-around. So there is experience at that level.

Mr. CASTILLO. For us in Miami-Dade, part of what we learned from Andrew is the need, because the south end of the county was separated in part through communications, just the lack of communications, we decentralized our decisionmaking process and allowed for some autonomy if there is no communications, primarily in the fire and emergency services, to be able to work independently if needed, but as soon as possible be part of the main system.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. If the Chair would indulge me just one more question, because I think it is the question that most of America wants to know. It is this. We all sat in frustration, in fact, somebody said at one of our briefings, I think a member of the cabinet said the problem was we were all looking through the same soda straw and we saw the same particular things, particularly at the Convention Center and at the Astrodome. And one of my colleagues said, well that may well be true, but everybody that had a television set in the world was looking through that same soda straw. And it reminded me of something that used to be in the Union Pacific Railroad Engineers Manual. It said that if two trains should approach each other on the same track, both shall come to a complete stop and neither shall advance until the other is passed. Literally, for 3 days we watched as it seemed like no one was getting the needed supplies of water and things into the people there.

Just from your experience, and this is not about fault-finding but we have to make sure this never happens again, particularly here in the United States, what should have happened then? Was that ultimately the Federal Government's responsibility, the State's responsibility, the local government responsibility? How do we make sure that does not happen again?

Mr. SHAYS. I think what we will do is we will leave that question open because it would take another 5 minutes to respond to it. But I will ask that question in my time if we do not get an answer before then.

We will go now to Mr. Owens. We are being a little more generous with the time because we have so many people to respond to the questions.

Mr. OWENS. I apologize if my questions are redundant but I want to make sure it is on the record. Do you all have systems in place now where there is standardized communication between the first responders, where the firemen can talk to the policemen and the police can talk to the firemen on the same radio frequencies? Can we assume that is a fait accompli in all of your areas?

Mr. BOBB. Yes.

Mr. OWENS. Is there anybody who does not have that? Because I am not certain New York City has it even now after losing so many firemen in September 11th. I am almost certain that they do not have it yet completed between the firemen and the police. In D.C., you have Park Police, Capitol Police, D.C. Police, Secret Serv-

ice, etc. Are they all on the same radio frequency? Can they all communicate with each other?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Let me just add one point to that. I am from the Washington Council of Governments. The one point I would make is with the Federal funds that were made available to this region we purchased I believe 1,000 interoperable radios that have been cached in various parts of the region and have been regularly made available, basically dispatched to first responders so that every jurisdiction can have that level of intercommunications.

Mr. OWENS. So you can say authoritatively that they can communicate with each other, D.C. Police, Park Police, Capitol Police, Secret Service, etc.? Or you do not know?

Mr. ROBERTSON. When they are using the interoperable radios they certainly can.

Mr. OWENS. They all have purchased the interoperable radios?

Mr. ROBERTSON. They all have access, yes.

Mr. OWENS. Does anybody else want to comment?

Mr. BOBB. We have about 1,250 800 megahertz radios and we have those cached in different parts of the region. Those radios gives us an opportunity to provide those to all of those law enforcement agencies over which they can, in fact, speak to each other.

Mr. OWENS. Has the Department of Homeland Security taken any steps to standardize communications, vehicles, mechanisms across the country? Are they moving in that direction? I can buy a light bulb in New York and know that if I screw it in in California it is going to work. Any electric appliance bought anywhere in this country, you can know that if you plug it in it is going to work. So is it so difficult to get standardized communication equipment? Are we on our way to some kind of national standardized version of all this equipment, so that if you may be called upon to help in some other area your radio equipment works? In New Orleans, it seems they did not have any equipment at all at one point; nobody could communicate with anybody, which is most shocking. But anyway, is there any movement in that direction that you know of to standardize it so that across the country first responders, people in emergency situations can talk to each other?

Mr. BOBB. I am not aware of any standardization that would place a D.C. first responder on the same frequency as one in California wherein we can talk back and forth.

Mr. OWENS. You do not know of any workshops, forums, anything underway by Homeland Security to reach this goal?

Mr. CARPER. In the actual National Preparedness Goal for Homeland Security there are requirements for interoperability that most of the funding streams that have grants related are requiring that type of interoperability to occur. Now are they there yet?

Mr. OWENS. That is mandated?

Mr. CARPER. That is a standard and that is required. But are we there yet? I would think for most jurisdictions, no.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you.

Ms. PERETT. Sir, may I comment also. I just wanted to tell you that in Los Angeles County we have a Regional Tactical Communications System and it does include the sheriff, the Association of Fire Chiefs, the Association of Police Chiefs, LAPD, L.A. City fire, L.A. County fire, Department of Health Services, the California

Highway Patrol, and Federal representation, the U.S. Secret Service. What we are doing right now——

Mr. OWENS. Did you mention firemen?

Ms. PERETT. Did I mention firemen? Yes, sir. We have a cross-talk capability and we also have a mobil unit that can actually go out and patch together communications now. I would liken it to the Volkswagen—we would like to have a Cadillac to do this but we have a Volkswagen and it does work and they are able to communicate with each other.

Mr. OWENS. On first responders, do you have first responders? And I again want to salute the first responders in New Orleans because they were in a situation where if they lived in the city, and it looked like the majority did live in the city, their families were involved in the catastrophe and most of them kept working. I want to salute them. But if you had a similar catastrophe in New York, most of the first responders do not live in the city of New York. Do you think it is fair to ask that first responders live no more than 30 minutes away from their assignment?

Mr. BOBB. When we look at the lessons learned thus far from New Orleans, one of the things we are doing as part of our planning going forward is to ensure that the first responders' families are in fact taken care of, such that our first responders can then take care of literally thousands of other people.

Mr. OWENS. Do you have a city requirement that people live within the boundaries of the city who are first responders, firemen and the police?

Mr. BOBB. No, we do not.

Mr. OWENS. So they may live more than an hour away?

Mr. BOBB. We do not have a residency requirement for our first responders in the District of Columbia. But part of our plan is that we will have X number of persons available to us in the event of an emergency. But we do not have a residency requirement.

Mr. OWENS. Los Angeles, do you have one?

Mr. STANLEY. No, we do not have a residency requirement for our first responders.

Mr. OWENS. Is this not a built in weakness that stands out in terms of first responders that we depend on to be first responders? If they are not there, how can they respond?

Mr. STANLEY. As Mr. Bobb indicated, we do have those that are on shift and working and we know what the capabilities are there and we know how to get people in. Sometimes, depending on the nature of the disaster, they actually respond better from outside. So it is not a one size fits all.

Mr. OWENS. They respond better from outside despite traffic jams and so forth?

Mr. STANLEY. Well, we have ways of getting them in. That is why, as Ms. Perett was talking about, we reach out and liaison with other jurisdictions we assist in getting those resources into the area that is needed.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you.

Mr. SHAYS. The gentleman's time is expired. I thank you.

I think of Los Angeles as so big that, heck, everybody would have to live in Los Angeles.

Mr. Van Hollen, I am going to give you the floor, but I would first ask unanimous consent that the testimony of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals [PETA], presented by Daphna Nachminovitch, director, Domestic Animal and Wildlife Rescue and Information, be submitted for the record. And without objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to follows:]

TESTIMONY OF

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS (PETA)

PRESENTED BY

DAPHNA NACHMINOVITCH
DIRECTOR, DOMESTIC ANIMAL AND WILDLIFE
RESCUE AND INFORMATION

SEPTEMBER 15, 2005

BEFORE THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

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Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

My name is Daphna Nachminovitch. I am the director of rescue operations for PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today through this written testimony on behalf of our more than 850,000 members and supporters throughout the United States and around the world, and the tens of millions of people across this country whose families include companion animals.

As you analyze the government's response to the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and the ensuing floods, I ask you to keep one question in mind: Did our government know the people who desperately needed help in the wake of this disaster?

I ask this question because FEMA, Louisiana state officials, the Red Cross, and other agencies handed down orders that forced tens of thousands of people, some under threat of arrest, to abandon their animals. Who were these people? One was Gary Lee Mullins, 55, of New Orleans. He climbed a tree as flood waters rose and for five days held his16-year-old dog in his arms. When his rescuers finally arrived, they told him he would have to leave his dog. "I could not leave her alive in the tree, she was too old to survive," Mr. Mullins said, after he was reduced to killing his beloved companion rather than leave her to die alone and afraid.

Another was Valerie Bennett, 34, of Slidell, Louisiana, who told the Associated Press that she was so desperate that she offered her evacuators both her own and her mother's wedding rings in an attempt to bribe them into letting her bring her dog. They refused.

Others were nameless faces who wept before television news cameras as they left animals on rooftops or in the streets surrounded by flood waters. One was a sobbing little

boy whose dog, Snowball, was forcibly pulled from his arms. Another was a blind woman who was told that she had to leave her seeing-eye dog behind. She would not.

These people were twice victimized: first by hurricanes and floods and then by government and nonprofit agency officials who forced them to abandon cherished family members. Some people risked—or lost—their lives when they refused to leave their homes before and after the hurricane because they could not leave their animals to face the storm and the floods alone. Some who had the opportunity to get into boats and helicopters or to seek comfort in shelters without their animals refused and chose instead to try to survive in the streets, struggling for food and water, because the boats and helicopters and shelters would not admit animals.

Who are these people, these victims of Hurricane Katrina and of all future disasters? They are people who consider their animals to be true members of their families, and decent people don't willingly turn their backs on their families in a crisis. They would no sooner leave their dog or cat than they would desert a defenseless child or an elderly parent. And, as animal companions now live in 63 percent of all American households—nearly 70 million homes—these people are the majority.

The government chose to ignore this when it forced these people to abandon their animals. This was not only illegal, according to Chapter 14, Section 102.1, of Louisiana's Revised Statutes, which prohibits animal abandonment, it was also immensely cruel to the thousands of storm survivors already crushed by their losses, as they will now be left to face the additional guilt and anguish of not knowing what became of animals they loved and cherished.

Many animal protection organizations understand the deep bond between humans and animal companions and sent rescue teams that could have lifted some of the burden from FEMA and state officials. Yet, for reasons that have not been fully explained, they were not allowed to enter flooded areas. A full six days after Hurricane Katrina struck, experienced, well-equipped animal rescue crews were still being denied entrance to New Orleans to help animals. Many regions of Mississippi were off-limits to animal rescuers more than a week after the hurricane. Rescuers reported that residents were desperate for food and veterinary care for cats, dogs, and other animals. Horses injured by flying debris and countless stray animals were found scavenging in the devastation of southern Mississippi. By September 6, London's *Daily Telegraph* was reporting that "thousands of animals" had been left "stranded and starving to death" in the city. Images of dogs stranded on rooftops were broadcast nightly on television news programs.

Can you explain to evacuated hurricane victims, already shattered by the trauma of leaving their animals behind, why rescuers were kept from saving their animals for nearly a week? The delay made a terrible situation even worse. This is what Laura Brown, PETA's Rescue Team captain, still working in New Orleans, said on September 12: "In the last 48 hours, I have used a crowbar to pry open a boarded-up home and pull out a starving, terrified dog who somehow survived for two weeks on old garbage. While fighting nausea from the stench of contaminated flood waters, I spotted a terrified Chow Chow, his left eye missing, hiding in sewage collected under his crushed home, and coaxed him to safety. While military helicopters roared overhead, I gathered a starving dog in my arms and gave her her first drink of fresh water in more than a week. I waded through waist-deep noxious water to reach an emaciated pit bull stranded on a feces-

covered porch. I fed 50 lovebirds and finches I found standing on the rotting remains of their cagemates. And I have searched for telephone bills in these homes, hoping to find a number that will lead to the people who are surely frantic about their animals."

These rescues continue even as this committee considers how to devise an effective response to disasters. As you hear the testimony and formulate plans, I ask you to remember who these victims are: They are the animals, yes, and they are also the people who love all members of their families and who will risk their lives to save their animals. They should never again be bullied into abandoning their animals just because FEMA and other agencies were not adequately prepared. Animals must be included in all future disaster response plans. It is too late for many of the families and their animals whose lives were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, but we now have an obligation to prevent similar tragedies in the future. Please do not waste this opportunity. Thank you.

Daphna Nachminovitch is PETA's Director of Domestic Animal and Wildlife Rescue and Information, supervising all of PETA's animal rescue operations, including those in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and leading PETA's efforts in New York City to help stranded animals and their guardians following the 9-11 attacks. She also oversees PETA's responses to thousands of cases of neglect and violent crimes against animals occurring across the United States annually, as well as PETA's wildlife division, and mobile spay/neuter clinic.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Van Hollen, you have the floor.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all again for your testimony.

I think we all know that the best laid plans can sometimes go awry when you are actually in a particular situation. The best way to test that is to, as best we can, have simulations. Obviously, we can never simulate the exact thing, but at least in terms of the first responders, we can do so through exercises for preparedness. So I hope going forward that will be something that all of our jurisdictions around the country, especially those most at risk, prepare for.

Let me just ask the gentleman from the District of Columbia, Mr. Bobb, first of all with respect to the communications systems. Are your communications systems all interoperable with, for example, the National Guard if they were to come in? I mean, how far down the line does the interoperability work?

Mr. BOBB. What we did in the National Capital Region is we purchased a cache of radios that are interoperable and those radios, in the event of a major disaster, will be distributed to our first responders and they will be able to communicate. And those radio caches are located in two separate areas throughout the National Capital Region. Our goal is that we can get those radios to our first responders within 2 hours.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Robertson, there was a meeting, as you know, of COG yesterday, you testified about that, it was reported in today's paper about how the National area would organize differently possibly based on lessons learned from Katrina. And the statements were that, you know, FEMA's response was so disastrous in the Katrina area that we could not rely in any way on FEMA going forward. Can you comment on what is coming out of COG these days, and I do not know if there was consensus within COG about how to move forward.

Mr. ROBERTSON. I think there is some consensus from COG on how to move forward. And I think some of the other panelists touched on it best, in that when there is an emergency or incident the local folks are the first responders, the incident commanders. If that capacity is overwhelmed, Federal and State resources trigger in or cascade in at the appropriate levels. What the Council of Governments is planning to do, working with the local, State, Federal, and in many cases the private sector partners, is to re-examine the plans, assess whether or not those requirements are being fully met against perhaps the scenarios that perhaps were not considered previously.

A lot of the emergency exercises and incidents that we have had in our region have looked at a number of incidents, oftentimes terrorism, and we have seen some real life examples with Hurricane Isabel in our region. But as we have seen in New Orleans, there is the capacity to have something that is truly catastrophic that not only taxes the ability of one jurisdiction but surrounding jurisdictions. We do not have that mutual aid capacity in a place like New Orleans that you would have in an area such as the Washington area where, for example, in Arlington County on September 11th there was tremendous mutual aid capacity for those adjacent jurisdictions to support Arlington. So you did not have that total re-

gional situation where there was just a breakdown of the ability to support that.

What we propose to do is not necessarily to assume that the plans in place are no longer valid, but to test those, remeasure those, recalibrate those aligned with the new expectations. If there are situations, as some have said, that FEMA may not be able to provide support as quickly or as comprehensively as possible, then that is something folks need to know and account for. I think the effort, and this came out certainly in so many of the statements earlier today, is that it is the expectation to improve FEMA and to make sure that they can provide that level of support that the localities and the States are looking for.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Let me just say I think the lessons learned from Katrina are where FEMA's response was inadequate. We need to obviously beef up FEMA. There are some kind of events that are so catastrophic that they do overwhelm the ability of State and local officials to respond, where you need national assets, you need the National Guard. I am sure as COG moves forward, and this is obviously the National Capital Region, we have a huge Federal presence, they are going to be involved in disaster response and that coordination is critical.

Let me just ask you before my time is up. There is a proposal by Secretary Chertoff, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, to rearrange the position of what is now the regional coordinator within the department for the National Capital response. Right now, he reports to the Secretary. They would have him reporting to an Under Secretary. We have heard with respect to Katrina about the layers of bureaucracy slowing things down. This would put the person within the DHS who is responsible for the National Capital Region under one more layer of bureaucracy. I do not know, first, if are you aware of the proposal, and second, do you have concerns about their proposal and its implications?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Certainly, the Council of Governments was one of those agencies that called for and was grateful for the support of our delegation to have this special office. There are now two folks that have had that position. They are very much part of our regional planning process at all levels in our National Capital Region.

And we look to that office particularly to help marshal the Federal family, to make sure the many Federal agencies and resources are applied to our region and speak with as much as possible one voice. So we certainly would want that office to be as strong in support of our National Capital Region as possible. Many of our officials at the local and State level have raised some questions about that particular action.

Mr. BOBB. Our views are pretty strong in that regard. That is, this office is critical to the coordination of all of the Federal resources and in time of disaster helping to coordinate the Federal assets that would be available. To have that position report to someone other than the Secretary I think diminishes the power, the authority, the position's ability to influence other Federal agencies. So from our perspective, we think it diminishes the strength of the National Capital Region as opposed to uplifting it and giving us the ability to coordinate with other entities.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. Mrs. Maloney.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the world watched the disaster of Hurricane Katrina unfold in New Orleans, one of the most heard comments by people on the street, by the emergency responders, and even former FEMA officials was where is the Federal Government?

The head of FEMA, Michael Brown testified before Congress in 2003 and he said that he was taking steps "to ensure that FEMA's disaster teams could respond anywhere in the country within 12 hours and could deliver equipment and supplies within 24 hours." A quote from former FEMA Director Michael Brown.

But in New Orleans, tragically, it took more than 3 days. The mayor of New Orleans issued a desperate SOS for Federal assistance. The head of the Office of Emergency Preparedness publicly begged for troops, food, water, please come, please help. And a former FEMA official wondered publicly what in the world was going on.

I would like to get the perspective of the local officials here today on what you saw in New Orleans. I would like to start with Mr. Carper. Were you surprised at how long it took FEMA to respond?

Mr. CARPER. I believe there are three things that happened. One was, there was certainly a lack of adequate planning for the scope of the emergency; two, there was a lack of resources to respond to it; and three, there was just not enough on the ground soon enough. Looking at the whole system, it was disappointing to see FEMA respond in as much as we have planned for these catastrophic events time and time again and knowing that you are going to need these overwhelming amount of resources on the ground quickly. We saw this in Hurricane Andrew where it took a while to ramp up. But once the military got on the ground, things began to stabilize. And that is just the way it works in the large-scale events.

Mrs. MALONEY. But when did the military get on the ground?

Mr. CARPER. After Andrew, it was several days.

Mrs. MALONEY. Several days. They were on the ground that night in New York. When I went back to New York—they blew up our emergency headquarters, they created another one, military was there, FEMA was there, everyone was there, and we moved forward.

The former FEMA Director under President Reagan, General Julius Beckton, Jr., and he served from 1975 to 1989, he said Secretary Chertoff "does not have a full appreciation for what the country is faced with, nor does anyone who waits that long."

I want to go back to one of the biggest lessons learned from September 11th and it has been mentioned here today, we have had hearings on it, a number of us have had bipartisan legislation on it, and that is the communications system. They were warned that this was coming. Yet in September 11th one of the biggest tragedies is that the police and fire could not communicate. We know that hundreds of firefighters could have been saved if we could have communicated. Congress appropriated money to the Justice Department to find appropriate technology and to sponsor coordination. The National Institute of Justice has sponsored many meetings, funded projects. And we saw in Hurricane Katrina they re-

sorted to the ancient Greek's method of running by foot from one place to another to give them information. I just want to ask you about this. Just from the lesson in September 11th, our phones were down, no one could communicate, and they asked a number of us get us phones from the military, from the Federal Government, and in a bipartisan way we had phones down the next day so people could communicate. Yet it was days and days and days—I do not even know if they can communicate now. Have they gotten the government walkie-talkies or are they still using the ancient Greek way of running around with messages. Do you know, Mr. Carper?

Mr. CARPER. From my experience, what happens is that you begin bringing in mobil towers and mobil handsets of things of that nature, especially in an area that may have not had these resources at their disposal generally in some areas in and around the New Orleans area. Those are the types of things that they are doing at this particular point.

Mrs. MALONEY. But at the warning of Katrina, which was a serious storm and all the warnings, should they not have gotten that equipment down there knowing that the phones were not going to operate and were not going to be coordinated with the various police, fire, and other emergency workers. Is that not a natural reaction?

Mr. CARPER. Ideally, yes.

Mrs. MALONEY. My time is up.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you. Mr. Shays.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you all very, very much for being here. I would love a quick answer to your response when you saw the tragedy. Were you saying, my God. Thank God I am not the one. Or were you thinking, boy, if they had only done this. Do you get the gist of my question? Were you just riveted, saying what lessons can I learn? Because I have heard questions here we cannot learn from you and I am learning a lot from you. Even without knowing everything, you did see breakdowns and you must have said I am going to do something different. So just tell me your reaction, and maybe tell me something you think, my gosh, we better check up on a little better. Just a lesson you learned just watching this. We will start with you, Ms. Perett.

Ms. PERETT. Thank you. I had a couple of those feelings. First of all, I was heavily involved in the Northridge earthquake response and having lived through that. And at the time, it was the largest natural disaster in U.S. history and it was grueling and agonizing. And it pales in comparison.

Mr. SHAYS. I need you to answer my question. I only have 6 minutes here.

Ms. PERETT. I am so sorry. Yes, I felt, oh, my God, I am glad it is somewhere else and not me. And then second, I was utterly appalled at the lack of support for the victims.

Mr. SHAYS. And did you place that on local, State, or Federal, or all three?

Ms. PERETT. I was not in a position to judge that. But a lesson from the whole thing? I think we need to take a much closer look at our vulnerable populations and our economically disadvantaged populations to make sure we are taking care of them.

Mr. SHAYS. I do not want you to punt on that one. Did you feel like that would have been your responsibility at the local level to take care of these folks?

Ms. PERETT. Yes.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. Mr. Stanley.

Mr. STANLEY. Yes, I do believe it was our responsibility at the local level. One of the things that I saw immediately is that with the first load and quick load of water and food into the shelters is to get some radios so they could actually communicate and know what is going on. The world was hearing everything. They had no information and that just adds to the stress of the incident.

Mr. SHAYS. So you learned a lesson from this?

Mr. STANLEY. Absolutely.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Bobb.

Mr. BOBB. I guess a quick lesson for me, knowing that area really well, is what was the mayor's authority to in fact execute the emergency declarations and then to take actions pursuant to that to save people and to seize assets if necessary.

Mr. SHAYS. Implicit in your comment is you need someone truly in charge, no doubts, no questions, you can turn to, you can get authority from him or her who is the chief executive and you can go using their name if they have the authority. Am I reading too much?

Mr. BOBB. No, you are not. It is like take the emergency declaration, you know there is an emergency heading your way, it is going to happen, execute, put your emergency powers in place immediately.

Mr. SHAYS. And know who is in charge.

Mr. BOBB. Yes.

Mr. ROBERTSON. I think a quick initial lesson learned is the difficulty and the confusion of supporting the initial evacuees in places like the Superdome and other areas, the breakdown in the ability to support them with food, shelter, and basic law and order.

Mr. SHAYS. I cannot imagine a local official though sending folks to a facility like the Superdome without water, without food, without police protection, without backup electricity. That is kind of a basic thing. You would not do that, right, at least you like to think you would not?

Mr. ROBERTSON. That is pretty basic, yes.

Mr. CARPER. Certainly, what you have outlined in terms of my reaction, I was absolutely horrified. And also being a student of hurricanes, I was telling myself this is going to be one of the worst case scenarios for a hurricane impact. And I think that was self-evident a day or so out before the storm hit. I just thought to myself they are going to need to mobilize everything they have as quickly as they can get it there.

Mr. SHAYS. And what did it tell you about what you need to do?

Mr. CARPER. It makes me want to re-examine it as to what we can expect in the immediate aftermath and how long do our assumptions about relief, when are they valid. And that is what we will certainly take a look at.

Mr. SHAYS. Chief.

Mr. CASTILLO. For us, Hurricane Katrina, we got sort of the warm-up punch. It affected Miami-Dade before it crossed the State

and went into the Gulf. I remember thinking the same feeling that we had, although we knew Katrina was going to be a Category 1, with the same feeling we had when we were watching Andrew barrel toward us and knowing that it was going to be a major impact. You clearly go through all the plans that you have. You second guess yourself on did you do everything possible that you had in your plans and did not have in your plans, and ask for as much assistance as you could? The fact the magnitude of what was to be expected would cause me to question myself just to make sure that we did everything.

Mr. SHAYS. With the last minute I have, not all of you because we would not have time, but let me ask this question: Please tell me how reliant your locality has been on the National Guard during an emergency event you have experienced. Did you have sufficient manpower and equipment and other resources for your needs? Really what I am asking is this, is there any doubt that you need the National Guard? The National Guard is basically under the jurisdiction of the Governor. It is not the Reserves, it is not the Army. Is there any doubt that it is under the jurisdiction of the Governor?

Mr. CASTILLO. I can tell you for us, the State of Florida, after having been hit so many times last year, has done a lot to increase the State's level of preparedness at the same time we were. We received a lot of assistance through the State with the National Guard for us to help especially in the south end of the county with water and ice delivery.

Mr. SHAYS. The National Guard is the militia. Do you view the National Guard as being a State resource or as a Federal resource?

Mr. BOBB. In the case of the District of Columbia, it is a Federal resource.

Mr. SHAYS. In that case, clearly. For the others?

Ms. PERETT. It is a State resource. And we used it quite a bit during the Northridge earthquake and during the civil unrest.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you. Mr. Lynch.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While I certainly think that this panel has suffered enough, I cannot resist just one last question. Given the fact that the local government in this case, because of the breach of the levee, was suddenly under 18 feet of water or 22 feet of water with the surge, if they were here, let us turn it around, sort of what Mr. Shays was asking but I would like to turn it around. Since the officials on the ground and responsible in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast are not here, you all do have relevant and important experience that we can learn from. What questions would you ask the folks who were on the ground in control or certainly with positions of authority when Katrina was coming and after it had struck. If we could just go right down the line. What questions do you think were very important to ask? Because eventually we hope to have people from New Orleans and Mississippi and also Alabama here at some point to ask them what did go wrong.

Ms. PERETT. Let me make sure I understand your question. What we would ask of those officials, or what should have those officials been asking?

Mr. LYNCH. If you were trying to get to the root of what actually went wrong, lessons learned, the title of this hearing, what would you ask the folks who were in charge on the ground, whether State, Federal, or local?

Ms. PERETT. I think I would ask them if they had in place in advance a well-understood protocol for how the local city level was going to get resources from its next level of government, and how that next level of government was going to get resources. And then, in turn, did they know how to bring them back down and integrate them.

Mr. LYNCH. OK. Even if they are under 18 feet of water?

Ms. PERETT. That makes it hard. But I still think that is what I would want to know.

Mr. STANLEY. I would ask if they were here if they planned for the worst case scenario of what was the problems in the implementation of that plan.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you.

Mr. BOBB. I would ask the same question, why you did not implement your worst case scenario. You had a hurricane coming, it has crossed Florida at Category 1, it enters the Gulf of Mexico, the warm water of the Gulf is like fuel for a hurricane, it has been predicted you are going to get a Category 4, potentially a Category 5, plan for the worst, put the worst scenario plan in place, and then hope for the best.

Mr. LYNCH. Especially with the levee situation. I used to live in New Orleans, actually in Metairie, but worked at the Shell Oil refinery in Norco. This is back more than 20 years ago and they were worried about the levee back then. So it is not exactly a surprise to people that the structure, being as old as it was, that there was a breach in the face of a Category 4.

I am sorry. Mr. Robertson.

Mr. ROBERTSON. Just a variation on what has already been said. What level of information was available to them when they made the decisions that they did?

Mr. LYNCH. Do you mean were they watching the Weather Channel?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Well, that would help. But certainly what level of information they had, because there are decisions that are going to be made that are going to be triggered by a certain level of information and information exchange. And perhaps that information exchange did not happen.

Mr. LYNCH. OK. Thank you. Mr. Carper.

Mr. CARPER. Certainly that is a very good point there. Also, what their plan was in responding to the situational awareness. And also what the chronology of events were and who was talking to who in terms of the local to the State and the State to the Feds, and how was that being documented and what the responses were. That type of thing.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you, Mr. Carper. Chief.

Mr. CASTILLO. When they were under 18 feet of water, if I had the opportunity to ask them, if they could ask for and receive anything they wanted, what three things would they have asked for? I assume the first one would have been a boat, obviously. But what

other things could they have asked for if they could receive anything they wanted at that time.

Mr. LYNCH. Thank you. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. I just want to thank this panel. I know it has been a long day for you. We very much appreciate your testimony, your responding to our questions. It has been very helpful for the inquiry. Thank you very much.

We will take a 1-minute recess as we move to our next panel.

[Recess.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. The committee will be in order.

We have with us Dr. John R. Harrald, the professor of engineering management at the George Washington University, and he is the director for the Institute of Crisis, Disaster, and Risk Management; and Dr. James J. Carafano, who is a senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation. Thank you both for your patience in staying with us. If you would rise please for the administration of the oath.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Dr. Harrald, we will start with you, and then to Dr. Carafano. You have heard a lot of the comments today. If you can stay within the 5-minutes, great, but it is just us. And we appreciate you being here.

STATEMENTS OF JOHN R. HARRALD, PROFESSOR OF ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY AND DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR CRISIS, DISASTER, AND RISK MANAGEMENT; AND JAMES J. CARAFANO, SENIOR FELLOW FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AND HOMELAND SECURITY, HERITAGE FOUNDATION

STATEMENT OF JOHN R. HARRALD

Dr. HARRALD. My written comments have been submitted. And I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify. As you stated, I am the director of the Institute for Crisis, Disaster, and Risk Management at George Washington University. I will preface my remarks by saying I have not been down to New Orleans but my colleagues have.

Two of my colleagues are the medical officers for both the Montgomery County and Fairfax County Urban Search and Rescue Teams. We work closely with the American Red Cross and one of my colleagues is directing chapter operations in Pascagoula, MI. We are monitoring the operations here but also keeping in touch with what is going on down on the ground.

We can explain much of what we have witnessed during the last 2½ weeks but we cannot accept that this is the best that we can do. In Louisiana and Mississippi the heroic efforts of many men and women were not enough to compensate for the breakdown of our national response system.

In order to understand the lessons from the failed initial response to Hurricane Katrina and to use this knowledge to improve the preparedness of other metropolitan areas at risk, we must be able to separate systemic failures from issues of individual preparedness and competence. Did we choose the wrong strategies, structures, and policies, or was this just a failure to professionally

and competently execute? I believe if we ignore the systemic issues and simply replace people or reassign responsibilities, we may simply fail again in the not too distant future with a different cast of characters.

Prediction, planning, preparation, capacity, and capability are all essential if we are to avoid catastrophic consequences from a natural or technological disaster or a terrorist attack. We have done well with prediction, a scientific and technological task. We have also done reasonably well with the bureaucratic task of producing emergency plans.

We have however, in my opinion, confused preparing the Government with preparing the society at large. We have identified the problems we will solve and the capabilities we will need to respond to and recover from catastrophic events, but we have failed to make the investments and take the actions necessary to build this capacity and capability.

Appropriate scenarios have been used as the basis for Federal, State, and local catastrophic incident planning. As an example, the Catastrophic Incident Annex to the National Response Plan published by the Department of Homeland Security has clear assumptions. It assumes, for example, a catastrophic incident may cause significant disruption of the area's critical infrastructure, such as energy, transportation, telecommunications, and public health and medical systems.

All of these infrastructure were lost in New Orleans. It assumes the response capabilities and resources of the local jurisdictions may be insufficient and quickly overwhelmed. Local emergency management personnel who normally respond to incidents may be among those most affected and unable to perform their duties. In New Orleans, the leaders, emergency managers, and first responders and their families were, indeed, victims. The police and firefighters that responded were themselves homeless and were not reinforced by State and Federal resources for days.

The plan assumes a detailed and credible common operating picture may not be achievable for 24 to 48 hours, or longer. As a result, response activities must begin without the benefit of a detailed or complete situation and critical needs assessment. The failure to obtain the situational awareness during Katrina is well documented, as is the failure to act creatively and quickly based on incomplete information. The total breakdown of emergency communications was a key part of this failure.

Federal support must be provided in a timely manner, the plan assumes, to save lives, prevent human suffering, and mitigate severe damage. This may require mobilizing and deploying assets before they are requested via normal National Response Plan protocols. FEMA did, in fact, coordinate a massive mobilization effort. The need to actually deploy and execute assets, other than the search and rescue teams, was apparently not recognized.

The plan assumes that a catastrophic incident has unique dimensions, characteristics requiring that response plans and strategies be flexible enough to effectively assess emerging needs and requirements. The Department of Homeland Security has spent years developing a common national approach to incident management, at the direction of the President, through the creation of the National

Response Plan, the National Incident Management System, and the National Preparedness Goals that have been mentioned by others. Did this emphasis on structure and process diminish our ability to react creatively and adaptively?

The scale and scope of Hurricane Katrina is, in fact, unprecedented. However, as we have heard in the previous panel, other metropolitan areas are at risk to similar catastrophic scenarios. We have worked with a number, as I have stated in my written comments, a number of these localities.

I believe that the examination of the preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina is a critical national issue. An independent and expert review must assist us to:

Focus our efforts on reducing the vulnerability of those in harm's way in our major cities at risk; improve our ability to warn and to communicate, to identify and meet the immediate needs of potential victims following a catastrophic event; improve the agility, the mobility, the capacity, the self-sufficiency, and creativity of our National Emergency Management System; provide an integrated national approach to mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery; provide resources and information to elected and appointed officials to enable them to become better managers of extreme events. It is not just the emergency management community, as we have seen, that gets involved in these events, it is all appointed and all elected leaders. Where do they get the skill set to do that?

And to recognize that social and economic recovery requires a strategy for housing our citizens and recovering the local and regional economy.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Harrald follows:]

John R. Harrald, Ph.D.
Director, Institute for Crisis, Disaster, and Risk Management
The George Washington University
House Committee on Government Reform Hearings, September 15, 2005 :
"Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina"

Thank you Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to testify. We can explain much of what we have witnessed during the last 2 ½ weeks, but we cannot accept that this is the best that we can do. The alternative is to believe that when catastrophe strikes, we are unable to minimize the immediate human suffering by getting people out of harms way when possible, and incapable of meeting their critical needs when it is not. In Louisiana and Mississippi, the heroic efforts of many men and women were not enough to compensate for the breakdown of our national response system.

In order to understand the lessons from the failed initial response to Hurricane Katrina and to use this knowledge to improve the preparedness of other metropolitan areas at risk, we must be able to separate systemic failures from issues of organizational and individual preparedness and competence. Did we chose the wrong strategies, structures, policies and procedures or is was this just a failure to professionally and competently execute? I believe we are guilty of both doing some wrong things and doing some things wrong. If we ignore the systemic issues and simply replace people or re-assign responsibilities, we may simply fail again in the not too distant future with a different cast of characters.

Prediction, planning, preparation, capacity, and capability are all essential if we are to avoid catastrophic consequences from a natural or technological disaster or a terrorist attack. We have done well with prediction which is a scientific and technological task. We have also done reasonably well with the bureaucratic task of producing emergency plans. We have, in my opinion, confused preparing the government with preparing the society at large. We have spent far more on training first responders than we have in mitigating vulnerability, improving our ability to warn the citizens, or to educating and preparing the public. We have not adequately involved the private sector in preparedness or recovery. Our drills and exercises have identified the problems we must solve and the capacity and capabilities we will need to respond to and recover from catastrophic events be we have failed to make the investments necessary to build this capacity and capability.

The potential catastrophic impacts of a Category 4 or 5 hurricane strike near New Orleans were predicted and studied as have been the potential impacts of a massive earthquake in Los Angeles or San Francisco or a terrorist attack in Washington or New York. These scenarios have been appropriately used as the basis for federal, state and local catastrophic incident planning. For example, the Catastrophic Incident Annex to the National Response Plan published by the Department of Homeland Security assumes that:

- *"A catastrophic incident may cause significant disruption of the area's critical infrastructure, such as energy, transportation, telecommunications, and public health and medical systems."* The total loss of infrastructure in New Orleans is one the main discriminators between this event and prior near catastrophic events in U.S. history such as Hurricane Andrew and the Northridge earthquake. Post 9-11 infrastructure protection investments have focused on increasing the security of infrastructure, not in increasing its resilience.

- *"The response capabilities and resources of the local jurisdiction (to include mutual aid from surrounding jurisdictions and response support from the State) may be insufficient and quickly overwhelmed. Local emergency personnel who normally respond to incidents may be among those affected and unable to perform their duties."* The New Orleans leaders, emergency managers and first responders were all victims. The police and firefighters that responded were themselves, homeless, and were not reinforced by state and federal resources for days.

- *"A detailed and credible common operating picture may not be achievable for 24 to 48 hours (or longer). As a result, response activities must begin without the benefit of a detailed or complete situation and critical needs assessment."* The failure to obtain situational awareness during Katrina is well documented, as is the failure to act creatively and quickly based on incomplete information. The total breakdown of emergency communications was a key part of this failure.

- *"Federal support must be provided in a timely manner to save lives, prevent human suffering, and mitigate severe damage. This may require mobilizing and deploying assets before they are requested via normal NRP protocols."* FEMA coordinated a massive mobilization effort. The need to deploy assets, other than search and rescue, outside of normal protocols apparently was not recognized.

- *"Large numbers of people may be left temporarily or permanently homeless and may require prolonged temporary housing."* The peak shelter population was over 250,000 people; today over 125,000 evacuees are in temporary shelter and many of them will require extended housing assistance. We are only now developing a long term housing and recovery strategy.

- *"A catastrophic incident may produce environmental impacts...that severely challenges the ability and capacity of governments and communities to achieve a timely recovery."* Much of Southern Louisiana including New Orleans and Lake Ponchatrain is an environmental disaster area and the federal involvement in the environmental clean up will last years.

- *"A catastrophic incident has unique dimensions/characteristics requiring that response plans/strategies be flexible enough to effectively address emerging needs and requirements."* The Department of Homeland Security has spend years developing a common, national approach to incident management through the creation of the National Response Plan (NRP), the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Preparedness Goals. This emphasis on structure and process may have diminished our ability to react creatively and adaptively.

The scale and scope of Hurricane Katrina is unprecedented. However, we know that other major metropolitan areas are also at risk to similar catastrophic scenarios. Are we any more prepared to respond to a catastrophe in any of these cities than we were in New Orleans? Our Institute has partnered with the University of New Orleans to help improve the preparedness efforts in Washington and New Orleans. Ironically, UNO was working to mobilize churches and other community centers to help ensure that those without access to transportation would be evacuated. GWU, with assistance from UNO, conducted the after action review of the District of Columbia response to Hurricane Isabel in 2003. We found that, although the District plans were followed and systems generally worked well, that this tropical storm pushed the limits of the District's capabilities, that coordination with PEPCO was difficult, and that effective communication with large segments of the public was never achieved. The District of Columbia, the States of Virginia and Maryland, and the Council of Government are attempting to improve the readiness of the DC metropolitan area, but progress has been slow. As reported in yesterday's Washington Post, we still have no reliable way to inform the public of what to do in a large scale emergency situation.

California has had more success in preparing for earthquakes. The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and the 1994 Northridge earthquake ensured a level of public and political support for preparedness actions that did not exist in New Orleans and does not exist in Washington. We have worked with the American Red Cross and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to improve the preparedness for a catastrophic earthquake in the San Francisco Bay area and similar activities have occurred in Los Angeles. These efforts were fully supported by and coordinated with the State Office of Emergency

Services, and city and county emergency managers. . The ABAG work, which may be found on their web site, supports mitigation (retrofitting), public education, individual preparedness, and response planning. The Red Cross, for example, realizing that infrastructure damage would create virtual "islands" that may not be accessible from the outside or from each other, has planned to create self-support sheltering and feeding operations in each area. In spite of the relative success of these efforts, however, managers anticipate issues encountered in Louisiana, such as failure to communicate with and meet the needs of the neediest section of the public, failure to coordinate federal, state, local and NGO actions, and failure to establish and maintain reliable communications could occur.

I believe that the examination of the preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina is critically important and should be conducted by an independent body. This independent and expert review must assist us to:

- Focus our efforts on reducing the vulnerability of those in harm's way in our cities at risk,
- Improve our ability to warn and communicate, and improve our ability to identify and meet immediate needs following a catastrophic event,
- Improve the agility, mobility, capacity, self sufficiency, and creativity of our national emergency management system,
- Provide a conceptual framework for an integrated national approach to mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery,
- Provide resources and information to elected and appointed and appointed officials to enable them to become better managers of extreme events.
- Recognize that social and economic recovery requires a strategy for housing our citizens and recovering the local and regional economy.

Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Dr. Carafano.

STATEMENT OF JAMES J. CARAFANO

Dr. CARAFANO. Well, the President was absolutely correct when he said that the national response to Katrina was inadequate. And I think Americans certainly have the right to ask hard questions: what happened, why it happened, who is responsible, what can be done better. I think it is premature to answer all those questions. I think this committee can play an incredibly important role though in providing a framework for conducting that assessment and in assessing how far we have come as a Nation in preparedness since September 11th.

Just four points on context which I think are important to establish when we do this evaluation.

The first is scope. This is unprecedented. Over a million people at risk, 90,000 square miles. I think we have to have a realistic discussion of over how quickly and how soon you could get resources in, and how come we were so successful at saving hundreds and hundreds of thousands of lives during the event.

The second is I think there needs to be a clear distinction made in the character. There are two different kinds of disasters. There is the normal disaster, what the chiefs talked about, where you have this cascading of resources of local, State, and Federal, and normally massive Federal aid does not show up for days.

Catastrophic disasters are totally different in character. Tens or hundreds of thousands of lives are immediately at risk, and, more importantly, the State and local capacity is virtually wiped out. So you have created this 72-hour gap that you have to fill that you do not have to do in a normal disaster.

The other point I would make is everybody needs to understand that we got what we paid for. Since September 11th, we have been investing a lot of money. Most of it, virtually all of it has gone into building up for normal disasters. Very little of it has gone in to preparing for catastrophic disasters. Everybody wanted a piece of the pie, everybody wanted grants, everybody wanted something. So they gave money to New Orleans and now it is under 6 feet of water. So we have not been preparing for this kind of disaster.

And the final point is the one thing we know already that Katrina tells us is this Nation is not prepared for a catastrophic disaster. The irony is that in the area where we are least prepared, which is medical preparedness for a catastrophic disaster, the system was not stressed here. So our greatest weakness was not even apparent in this really terrible exercise.

You asked me to look at what State and local governments are doing now to deal with this kind of thing. There are three major points I would like to make that we know already. Federalism works. I think it is the best system. This notion of who is in charge was the problem, I think, is bogus. The mayor is in charge of the city, the Governor is in charge of the State, the President is in charge of the Nation. There is one thing we should not do—we should never change that balance of leadership and responsibility.

The second is virtually every city in this country has built an all-hazards response system. We build one system. If it is a fire, you

send a fire truck; if it is an explosion, you send a fire truck; if it is a terrorist attack, you send a fire truck. That is the right system and the one thing we should never sacrifice is our all-hazards approach.

The third is preparedness at the community level really has to be a bottom-up driven exercise. The research on this is very, very clear and strong. If the members of the community are not strongly involved in doing these plans and preparing, the plans are just not effective. Quite frankly, most of the communities in the United States are top-down. Emergency managers say this is what we are going to do. But the best plans and the most successful plans are the ones that start and build bottom-up.

There are things the Federal Government can do right now to help. I would just like to list those very quickly.

Secretary Chertoff released a Second Stage Review. He talked about spinning off the FEMA office as an independent agency in the Department, eliminating the layer of bureaucracy, consolidating all the preparedness activities in under secretaries so the States and local governments really do have a one-stop-shop. I think that is exactly right and I think Congress should support that.

The House has passed an excellent bill, the Faster and Smarter First Responders bill to make the grant system focus spending on national priorities rather than just frittering it around the country like we have been. I hope in conference with the Senate that the strong leadership that the House has shown in this area prevails and it becomes law.

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 required DHS to set up a regional framework. That still has not happened. I really, truly believe that if we had this regional framework in place it would have helped in coordination with the mayors and Governors and it would have alleviated a lot of problems we experienced. That is simply unconscionable. It needs to be fixed.

We need to reorganize the National Guard. Everybody acknowledges the National Guard is important. But the National Guard of the United States is not structured today to close the 72-hour gap. It is not structured to get there in under 24 hours and provide massive amounts of aid. And if we want the National Guard to respond to catastrophic disasters, we are simply going to have to structure it differently than it is now.

Finally, I will just finish with this. The Federal Government should really be focusing on two things. Only the Federal Government can mobilize a national system to respond to catastrophic disasters.

So No. 1, the Federal Government should be building the national response system. And where it should be giving money to States and focusing its resources with them, it should be on the things that help build that system that allows State and local governments to plug into that system, and those things are training, education, planning, information sharing, interoperable communications, and intelligence.

That is where the Federal Government should be making an impact at the State and local level. Beyond that, the Federal Govern-

ment should be spending Federal dollars on preparing Federal assets to respond to catastrophic terrorism.

I will just finish with this very quickly. Everybody has talked about interoperable communication. The Coast Guard, in its Deep Water modernization program calls for building a medium cutter. The Coast Guard saved 33,000 people. It was the only people that could have provided an integrated air picture, an integrated air command and control in Katrina.

But you know what? That medium cutter is not off the ground yet. We are not building it. This House voted to cut $200 million from the Coast Guard's modernization budget. So we are all screaming at interoperable communications and in the one area where the Federal Government could step in and could help, they have undercut their own ability to respond and do their mission. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Carafano follows:]

Improving the National Response to Catastrophic Disaster

Statement before the Committee on Government Reform

House of Representatives

By

Dr. James Jay Carafano
Senior Research Fellow
The Heritage Foundation

September 15, 2005

2154 Rayburn House Office Building

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Mr. Chairman and other distinguished Members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the lessons of the national response to Hurricane Katrina, the role of local communities in preparing for such disasters, and the role of the government.

President Bush was absolutely correct when he labeled the national response "inadequate." When national catastrophes occur, the resources of the nation have to be mobilized to respond immediately. And equally important, Americans must remain confident that their leaders, at all levels of government, are in charge and doing the right things to make all Americans safer. On both counts, the nation fell short and Americans have a right to understand why and what can be done better.

In my testimony, first I would like to discuss the key considerations that should shape the effort to learn from this tragedy. Second, I will assess the current efforts of communities across the nation to respond to similar challenges. Third, I would like to address the role of the federal government in assisting state and local governments in preparing for catastrophic disasters. Fourth, and finally, I would like to recommend actions that Congress should undertake.

The Disaster in Context—Scope and Character

In evaluating the response to Katrina and the understanding the lessons to be learned for enhancing national preparedness, assessments must take into account the scope and character of the disaster.

Scope of Tragedy

Hurricane Katrina is the largest physical disaster this nation has suffered in modern history. There is no other event which could be used as a standard for measuring the efficacy of the response. For example, the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center was narrow in the geographic scope and centered on a single jurisdiction. Damage to infrastructure was localized and the immediately affected population ranged in the tens-of-thousands. In contrast, Katrina affected an area over 90,000 square miles, disrupted the lives of millions and destroyed or degraded most of the region's infrastructure. The scope of the disaster represented an unprecedented challenge to emergency responders. As one veteran responder put it, the challenge of getting massive aid into flooded New Orleans and other devastated areas was a logistical problem like "landing an army at Normandy with a little less shooting." Transportation networks, power, and communications, all the things essential to speeding aid were wiped out.

Some observers remarked that the Gulf Coast looked like a third-world disaster. And they were right. The storm surge, wind, and flood washed away everything that makes a modern city and left a mass of desperation, difficult to get to. Any assessment of the response must be realistic in its expectations of how quickly the dire needs of a million

people over tens-of-thousands of square miles of devastated terrain could be addressed under these impossible conditions.

Character of Catastrophic Disaster

Katrina was also a different kind of disaster. In "normal" disasters, whether they are terrorist strikes like 9/11 or a natural disaster such as a flood or snow storm, a tiered-response is employed. Local leaders turn to state resources when they are exhausted. In turn, states turn to Washington when their means are exceeded. Both local and state leaders play a critical role in effectively communicating their requirements to federal officials and managing the response. In most disasters local resources handle things in the first hours and days until national resources can be requested, marshaled, and rushed to the scene. That usually takes days. With the exception of a few federal assets such as Coast Guard and Urban Search and Rescue, teams don't roll in until well after the response is well under way.

In contrast, Katrina was a "catastrophic" disaster. In catastrophic disasters, tens-or-hundreds of thousands of lives are immediately at risk. State and local resources may well be exhausted from the onset and government leaders unable to determine or communicate their priority needs. And unlike New York after 9/11 there were few place communities to turn for immediate help. Surrounding cities could quickly pitch in, over intact bridges, roads, and waterways. The small communities around cities like New Orleans, Biloxi, and Baton Rouge had little extra capacity before the storm. Now they have their own problems. National resources have to show-up in hours, not days in unprecedented amounts, regardless of the difficulties. That's a very different requirement for mounting a national response to normal disasters.

Success and Failure

Recognizing all the limitations of the national response in meeting the challenges of catastrophic disaster, it is equally important to focus on the incredible achievements of America's responders. Several hundred thousand were successfully evacuated before the storm. If they not been, the death toll would have been unimaginable. Tens-of-thousands were rescued during and after the storm under harrowing conditions, including over 33,000 by the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Coast Guard. Tens-of-thousands more, including those at the Superdome and Convention Center, were evacuated before they succumbed to dehydration, hunger, exposure, or disease. Today, many hundreds-of-thousands are being safely quartered by communities around the country.

In comparison to the devastation reaped by the Tsunami in Southeast Asia, the U.S. capacity to save lives in a similar disaster proved unparalleled. This just didn't happen. It resulted from the decisions of government leaders, volunteer groups, private sector initiatives, and the selfless actions of communities and individuals. All are vital components of a national response. All these efforts, the plans that guided them, and how they worked together, must be evaluated.

Since 9/11

Another point I would make in assessing how we move forward, is that Americans should realize that as a nation since 9/11 we have invested only a modicum of effort in preparing for catastrophic disaster.

The overwhelming effort at the federal level, as well as those in state and local governments has been on strengthening our ability to respond to "normal" disasters. In part, because that is they way Congress, states, and cities wanted it—all insisted that we made enhancing the nation's capacity to respond to "normal" disasters the highest national priority. The federal government was required to dole out grants with scant regard to national priorities. Katrina shows the limitations of that approach. Today, all the fire stations in New Orleans lie under water, as does much of the equipment bought with federal dollars. Only a national system—capable of mustering the whole nation—can respond to catastrophic disasters.

What Does Katrina Tell Us?

The final point I would make in putting Hurricane Katrina in context is that this tragedy leaves little question that we need a greater national capacity to respond to catastrophic disasters. Katrina provides a standard for the capabilities that must be on hand, for both catastrophic terrorist attacks and disasters. After all, there was little difference the effects of nuclear attack and the aftermath of Katrina other than the absence of mushroom cloud and radiation.

I would make one caveat to this conclusion -- that in at least one respect Katrina does not give a fair appreciation for what is needed to respond to catastrophic disaster. In the area of catastrophic response, few issues require more attention that public health and safety. Ironically, one area that has not received "catastrophic stress" in the aftermath of Katrina is medical response. The lives of hundreds-of-thousands were saved by the actions of responders before and after the storm. Next time the nation might not be so lucky.

Local Efforts—Thinking About the Unthinkable

Assessing how states and local communities are preparing to meet the challenges of catastrophic disasters is no easy task. I have long observed, "if you have seen what one city or state are doing about emergency preparedness and response, you have seen what one city or state are doing about emergency preparedness and response." In part, the diversity is understandable. Communities have different needs, conditions, and requirements and they should have the flexibility to shape their preparedness and emergency response programs to best meet their concerns. There are, however, some national trends worth pointing out. Four are of particular importance.

All-Hazards Response

The approach of most communities to disaster planning is "all-hazards." In other words, they have a single response system which can be adapted to meet a variety of natural and manmade disasters. Indeed, I would argue that preponderance of emergency preparedness efforts at the local, state, and federal level have focused on building an all-hazards response and have not been diverted to just preparing for terrorist attacks. I think that approach is correct and should remain so in the future.

A Federalist Approach

State and local governments assume in virtually every instance, state and local leaders will remain in charge and national assets, whether they come from other states, the private sector, or the federal government, will be in support of their efforts.
That is the right approach, even for catastrophic disasters. Even if the federal government thought it would be prudent to usurp the authority of the state and local governments in the early hours or days of a disaster, it is doubtful that such an effort would improve the efficiency of the response. In fact, the response might be even more confused and chaotic.

Unity of effort can be achieved and maintained under the federalist approach, even in catastrophic disasters, as long as state and local governments are still functioning. The continuity of state and local government under catastrophic conditions, however, is an area of concern. Not all cities have alternate and mobile command posts, or adequate plans for maintaining continuity of government in the substantial loss of infrastructure during a catastrophic event.

Stress Test

Most communities only invest a modicum of effort in assessing their capacity to execute response plans in the face of catastrophic disaster. In part, that is understandable. They have limited time and resources. Honing their capacity to meet every day emergencies, the kind that occurs day in and day out, is their priority. Additionally, officials are reluctant undertake exercises that begin with the presumption that at the outset of crisis they lack the capacity to address the needs of their citizens or take initiative.
Additionally, stockpiling assets for catastrophic disasters is extremely expensive. In any event, this might be of little use since these resources themselves might be destroyed in the catastrophe.

There are, however, common sense measures that all communities can take. The vital capacity that many communities lack is the means to assess the adequacy of their emergency response plans to meet catastrophic disaster before, during, and immediately after an event and communicate that information effectively to state and federal officials so that their needs can be anticipated, rather than having the federal and state government wait for formal assessments and requests before they marshal resources to respond.

Lack of Community-Based Planning

Most emergency response planning and preparedness activities at the state and local level is "top-down" rather than bottom-up. One indisputable fact should be the foundation of any public preparedness program: America does not have a culture of preparedness. There are simple measures that, if undertaken by individuals and communities, could limit the threat to people and property in the event of a disaster. Most Americans are oblivious to them and of the plans that their state and local officials have in mind for them.

Ironically, research suggests that the most effective preparedness response plans are those based on community-input. These plans can only be developed by engaging with communities, not just "leaders," but individual citizens.

Washington's Place

The worst lesson that could be learned from the disaster of Hurricane Katrina is that all the answers to addressing the needs of American in the face of catastrophic disaster are to be found in Washington. The federal government does have a unique and important role to play. Only the federal government can build a national response system, the kind needed in a catastrophic disaster to mobilize the resources of the nation in the face of a disaster that immediately overwhelms local leaders and puts tens-of-thousands of lives at risk. The federal government also has the responsibility to build the "plugs" that allow state and local government to "plug" into the system. This includes (1) training, (2) education, (3) planning, (4) interoperable communications, and (5) effective information-sharing. Beyond that, the federal government should focus federal dollars on building-up the federal assets needed to respond to catastrophic disasters.

Improving the National Response

The administration and the Congress must better coordinate, integrate, and focus federal efforts on developing the unique competencies needed to meet catastrophic disasters. To assist in this effort, Congress should:

Restructure the Homeland Security Grant System

The administration needs the authority and organization to build an effective national response system.[1]

- Pass HR 1544 The Faster and Smarter Funding First Responders Act. A similar measure should be applied to grants by the Department of Health and Human Services.

[1] James Jay Carafano and Alane Kochems "The First Responder Act: Congress Needs to Act," May 8, 2005 (Heritage WebMemo #742).

- Ensure that the Department of Homeland Security must fully implement Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8.

- Insist that the Catastrophic Disaster Annex to the National Response Plan must be quickly implemented.

Reorganize the National Guard

Most disasters, including terrorist attacks, can be handled by emergency responders. Only catastrophic disasters—events that overwhelm the capacity of state and local governments— require a large-scale military response. Assigning this mission to the military makes sense. It would be counterproductive and ruinously expensive for other federal agencies, local governments, or the private sector to maintain the excess capacity and resources needed for immediate catastrophic response. On the other hand, maintaining this capacity would have real utility for the military. The Pentagon could use response forces for tasks directly related to its primary warfighting jobs—such as theater support to civilian governments during a conflict, counterinsurgency missions, and postwar occupation—as well as homeland security. Furthermore, using military forces for catastrophic response would be in accordance with constitutional principles and would not require changing existing laws. These forces would mostly be National Guard soldiers, which are the troops that have the flexibility to work equally well under state or federal control. The force needs to be large enough to maintain some units on active duty at all times for rapid response and sufficient to support missions at home and abroad. For catastrophic response, three components would need to be particularly robust: medical, security, and critical infrastructure response.[2]

- Require the Defense Department to restructure a significant portion of the National Guard into an effective response force.

- Demand the Defense Department's Quadrennial Defense Review, in coordination with the Department of Homeland security, be used to determine the precise number of the forces that are required and how they can be established by converting the existing Cold War force structure into units that are appropriate for new missions overseas and at home.

The Role of the State Defense Forces

State and local governments will always need to draw support beyond their core of professional emergency responders for a catastrophic disaster.[3] While the National Guard is often the source of this support, it may not be enough. In addiction, if the National

[2] James Jay Carafano, "Foreign Disasters: Lessons for the Pentagon's Homeland Security Efforts," August 29, 2005 (Executive Memorandum #979).

[3] John R. Brinkerhoff, "Who Will Help the Emergency Responders?" June 2, 2005 (Heritage Lecture #882).

Guard is deployed the state must have a credible alternative. The Constitution authorizes the states to form other guards and militias. Some states have these volunteer groups. They are of varying quality and utility. These volunteer groups could be useful backup asset for catastrophic disaster. I do not recommend federal funding for state guards, but I do think the federal government should set national standards and provide incentives to states to address the readiness of their volunteer defense forces.[4]

- Require the Department of Defense, in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security, to draft national performance standards for state volunteer defense forces.

- Authorize federal departments to advise and evaluate these forces and allow state defense personnel to undertake military and homeland security training and education opportunities at the state's expense.

Follow Through on the Reorganization of the Homeland Security Department

An independent review chaired by The Heritage Foundation and the Center for Strategic and International Studies argued that this structure was not suitable for leading the nation in preparing or responding to catastrophic disasters.[5] It recommended consolidating preparedness activities under an Under Secretary and creating a true "one-stop" shop for preparedness activities for state and local governments, as well as strengthening FEMA and making it an independent agency of the department, eliminating a level of bureaucracy and focusing the agency squarely on its traditional role of planning and coordinating the national (not just federal) response to disasters. In July 2005, the new Homeland Security Secretary announced the results of his "Second Stage Review" of the department's organization and missions. He proposed reforms that would have addressed these issues. Hurricane Katrina struck before his reforms could be fully implemented.

- Support full-implementation of the Chertoff's Second Stage Review.

- Require preparedness activities to be consolidated under an undersecretary.

- Insist FEMA be an independent operating agency focused on national response.

- Insist FEMA remain part of the department to ensure that response efforts are well integrated with all the critical missions supporting protection of the homeland.

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[4] Arthur N. Tulak, et al., "State Defense Forces and Homeland Security, *Parameters* (Winter 2003-04), pp. 132-46.

[5] James Jay Carafano, and David Heyman "DHS 2.0: Rethinking the Department of Homeland Security," December 13, 2004 (Special Report #02), pp. 16-17.

Establish a Regional Structure

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 required the DHS to propose a regional framework but provided no guidance on how to implement the system or its purpose. It states only that: Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the [DHS] Secretary shall develop and submit to Congress a plan for consolidating and co-locating—(1) any regional offices or field offices of agencies that are transferred to the Department under this Act, if such officers are located in the same municipality; and (2) portions of regional and field offices of other Federal agencies, to the extent such offices perform functions that are transferred to the Secretary under this Act. The department failed to meet the time line and has yet to announce a plan for a regional framework. This organization could have significantly contributed to improving coordination for catastrophic disasters.[6]

- Demand Homeland Security create a regional framework with the primary aims of enhancing information sharing and other coordination among the states, the private sector, and the headquarters in Washington.

- Require that the offices be led by political appointees who enjoy sufficient clout to gain ready access to local leaders. Ideally, these individuals would include former politicians, police chiefs, and other people who have some background in both homeland security issues and their geographic areas of responsibility.

- Require the first priority of this regional organization should be to support the flow of information and coordinate training, exercises, and professional development for state and local governments and the private sector in responding to catastrophic disaster.

Build a "Culture of Preparedness" and Personal and Community Responsibility

In comparison to the devastation reaped by the Tsunami in Southeast Asia, the U.S. capacity to save lives in the aftermath of Katrina proved unparalleled. This just didn't happen. It resulted from the decisions of government leaders, volunteer groups, private sector initiatives, and the selfless actions of communities and individuals. All are vital components of a national response. Yet more could have been saved in individuals and communities had met their basic civic responsibilities. America does not have a culture of preparedness. The Department of Homeland Security's current approach to enhancing public preparedness is deeply flawed. Instead of trying to run an ineffective advertising campaign from Washington, the department needs to refocus its programs to empower state and local governments to create effective "bottom-up" preparedness from individuals and communities. Initiatives like Ready.gov and National Preparedness Month are redundant with programs run by the American Red Cross and will never be as

[6] Edwin Meese III, James Jay Carafano, and Richard Weitz, "Organizing for Victory: Proposals for Building a Regional Homeland Security Structure," January 21, 2005 (Heritage Backgrounder #1817).

effective programs run by communities with the participation and leadership of local citizens.[7]

While the federal government's role in public preparedness should not be large, it should be effective and well-integrated with all the other preparedness, mitigation, and outreach activities. This can best be done by consolidating all of the Homeland Security Department's tasks under one place in the department, as recommended in "DHS 2.0: Rethinking the Department of Homeland Security."

- Insist that the department help state and local communities develop a culture of preparedness by helping them to establish training programs for state and local leaders. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program was an attempt to do this.

Educate Our Leaders

There is no adequate national program to educate and exercise state and local leaders in how to prepare for catastrophic disasters. The DHS lacks an institution to serve as a focus for professional development of its leaders and a forum for educating other leaders in other agencies and other countries, similar to the Defense Department's War Colleges and National Defense University.

- Require a Homeland Security University.

- Require the University, in cooperation with the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security to create an exportable education program for governors and mayors of major metropolitan areas and their staffs for dealing with catastrophic disaster.

- Require TOPOFF exercises only once every four years, in the second year of a presidential term. This will allow more time to incorporate lessons learned and shift more resources into more frequent regional exercises.

- Insist on a joint NORTHCOM/FEMA exercise program.

Build a Knowledge Network for Evaluating Response Plans

Through the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) in Oklahoma City, the Department of Homeland Security has developed an effective knowledge network that provides lessons learned and assess technology needs for state and local governments. This system could be expanded to provide technologies for allowing state and local governments to conduct self-assessments of response plans including metrics, measurement, operations analysis, and best practices.

[7] James Jay Carafano, "Beyond Duct Tape: The Federal Government's Role in Public Preparedness" June 3, 2005 (Heritage Executive Memorandum #971).

- Require the Department of Homeland Security to provide analytical self-assessment tools for state governments.

Where Do We Go From Here?

These measures are steps that can be taken right now to shift the federal government toward building the right national response system for the nation. I urge the Congress to make them a priority. I look forward to discussing these other recommendations during the course of the hearing.

Once again, thank you, Mr. Chairman and the rest of the Committee for holding this hearing and for inviting me to participate. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. You got a lot in there.

Dr. CARAFANO. I am a New Yorker, we talk quick.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Let me ask a fundamental organizational question. Dr. Carafano, you allude to it in your written statement, and that is the role of FEMA. As you know, this Congress took FEMA out of being a direct report to the President and put it in the Department of Homeland Security as part of the Homeland Security Act.

You can argue I guess whether we did the right thing or the wrong thing. It seems to me that whoever is in FEMA ought to have that direct pipeline to the White House. That is what is important. If there is an emergency, people on the ground should not have to have go-betweens where they can get the call. Because there are calls on this thing nationalizing this that can only come from the White House. Is this an organizational problem? What is your reaction to that last question?

Dr. CARAFANO. I do not think so. Quite frankly, I think if we had left FEMA out, then FEMA still would have failed because it could not draw on a national response system that could mobilize this kind of response. And then we would be sitting here saying, oh, the problem was we did not put FEMA in DHS, and gee, if we had just done that, it would have all been better.

I do not think it is an organizational issue. I think, quite frankly, it is a bogus issue. The National Response Plan clearly has the means for FEMA to talk directly to the President. The notion that the Director of FEMA cannot call up the President in the middle of a crisis and get what he needs I think is silly.

I think FEMA is way better off inside DHS. There are thousands of people now in DHS who are mobilized in support of FEMA. If it were a little tiny separate agency, as it was before, it would not be able to turn around immediately and draw on those assets. The Secretary of Homeland Security has one of the largest Federal agencies in this country. He has a lot of horsepower that he can draw on and bring in in support of FEMA.

I think the Secretary fixed the problem. He had an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy by creating an Under Secretary over FEMA. He said let us strip that away, create an independent agency and have FEMA focus on FEMA's primary core competency and primary mission, which is exactly this. Every day the FEMA Director should get up and think about what am I going to do when the next Katrina strikes?

And then what he said, and I thought this was brilliant, he said to take all the preparedness stuff out of FEMA, which really has nothing to do with responding to Katrina, which is really administrative stuff—it is planning, it is prep stuff, it is going to meetings, it is eating donuts—and said let us consolidate all that in one place with the critical infrastructure, preparedness, with the grants and have one guy do that in an Under Secretary so the FEMA guy can concentrate on FEMA.

And the model for this, the military has exactly the right model for this. The combatant commander in CINCOM is fighting the war in CINCOM; that is his only job, he is fighting the war. It is not his job to conduct boot camp training, that is the service's job.

So you have the support function and you have an operational function. You put all the support function in one place and say you are the support guy, you work on the preparedness and everything. And then when the button hits, you have a field general, and that is the FEMA Director.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Dr. Harrald.

Dr. HARRALD. I agree with most of that and disagree with little. As academics, we have to pick a little bit of that. I think one of the misnomers is that FEMA responded to this. The Federal Government responded through the National Response Plan. The primary Federal official, as appointed by Secretary Chertoff, who by the National Response Plan is the incident manager, he quite correctly appointed the Director of FEMA. And the primary Federal official is now the Chief of Staff of the Coast Guard. It is not a FEMA response, it is a national response.

So the question, as I was saying, there are two systemic issues in there. One that was mentioned in the prior panel, which is you have created these response positions in the National Response Plan, what competencies do you expect to have to fill them.

And I was part of the review process for the National Response Plan when this was being put together. I ran the State and local groups and a lot feedback from State and local groups that when bad things happen there is the black hole of communications. We know this happens. And what has to happen is the creativity, the adaptability on the response. And so I have this fear that we have this as the water was rising from the south, the bureaucracy was descending from the north.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That is a double whammy.

Dr. HARRALD. When they meet, you really want a creative aspect.

Now on as far as the organization within, I do not quite agree on the separation of the preparedness. Because one of the things we are losing in what is done is the integration on natural disaster massive events of mitigation, vulnerability reduction, response and recovery and the tradeoffs that involves. I know there is concern within FEMA, there is concern of people who work the mitigation programs, who work for the States and cities that the preparedness becomes terrorism preparedness and we lose the focus on mitigation.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Let me just ask one other question. Nationalizing the National Guard, what is the protocol on that? Do you need the permission of the Governor in a case? Can a President come in? What is generally the protocol on that? Because one of the problems in New Orleans that I think the world was shocked at is looking there and just seeing anarchy there in an American city.

Dr. CARAFANO. The National Guard can operate in one of three modes. It can operate under State control, then it can do anything the Governor wants within the laws and the constitution of the State.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. That is normal.

Dr. CARAFANO. Then it can operate under a Title 32 status, which means that the Federal Government writes a check but they are still under the control of the State and they are not subject to

posse comitatus. Or they can operate under Title 10 status in which they are Federal troops and they respond to the President.

One of the things I would hate to see lost is that system, because what that system gives you is enormous flexibility in how you can have the National Guard respond to many, many different situations. That is one of the great virtues and strengths. And I know John would agree with me on this, if you have seen one disaster, you have seen one disaster. No two disasters are ever going to be exactly alike. And if we plan to do the next Katrina perfectly, we will fail.

You want to have that flexibility of Federal or State control always to have the options. The genius is in the leadership, to pick the right mix. It is like the guy in Mission Impossible at the beginning of the show when he would go through the cards and pick out exactly the right people for the mission. The genius is to pick the right command and control structure to fit the crisis, not to try to codify in law a very rigid decisionmaking thing that you have to do this or have to do that.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. But looking back at New Orleans and seeing the anarchy, how did that happen? What should have happened?

Dr. CARAFANO. Again, I think the failure there is the 72-hour gap. Nobody expects people to roll in in under 72 hours, particularly where you have wiped out the infrastructure and everything else.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. The place is flooded, 80 percent under water.

Dr. CARAFANO. Right. I think the issue really here is the structure of the National Guard, that it is not structured to do these missions. I have always recommended that we ought to build a National Guard structure that could respond to the catastrophic disasters which only the Federal Government can do, and that one-fifth of that force would always be on active duty and working for NorthCom 24/7/365 and on strip alert like the 82nd Airborne. Because that is the only way you are going to amass that amount of resources and get it into a disaster in under 24 hours.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. And I just would say I think one of the most shocking things, and there were a lot of them that came out of this, was just seeing the helicopters coming in, help coming in and having citizens fire on these people. We went back and resorted to the state of nature almost.

Dr. HARRALD. I think the sequence of events of, one, not evacuating New Orleans and having 150,000 or more people there, then what is the impact of that on the decisions of people outside. And I think we were continuing on with our plan without the new information.

That afternoon before the levees broke and after the storm had gone through, we were working closely with the Red Cross and I was in the Red Cross Disaster Operations Center when the report was received that the levees had not failed yet, etc., and Joe Becker, who is the vice president for Disaster Services, who has been to many disasters and has been a local chapter manager, leaned forward, and the picture of the hurricane was still on the screen up there, and he said to everybody, just kind of kicking back a lit-

tle bit, and said, "Look, because we have not heard anything does not mean good things, it means bad things, No. 1. No. 2, look at the size of that storm, calculate the number of people underneath that footprint, and be prepared to deal with the worst thing we have ever dealt with." And at that point in time, for his position, I think that is what you want to see. I do not think that happened in the State. I do not think that same thought process happened within the deployed FEMA region. Most people were kicking back and waiting for the information to come to them.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Interesting. Good point.

Yes, Dr. Carafano.

Dr. CARAFANO. If I could just go back to the National Guard. The other key point there I think is that when you get to the catastrophic, no State is ever going to have within its own National Guard the resources it needs to respond. They all have different kinds of units. For example, the major unit in Louisiana was an armor brigade. If it had been home, it would not have been much help because it had all the wrong kinds of equipment.

And that the other problem is that they are in the State, they are in the target area, so they might well be either victims, their equipment could be destroyed, or the infrastructure could limit their ability to respond. So when you have a national response, you are going to need the "National" Guard to respond, not the individual State Guards.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. And they were not prepared to do that. Nobody was prepared.

Dr. CARAFANO. We are prepared to do that. We always do that. If you look at these disasters, the Guard always draws on units from around the country and sometimes they draw on Federal forces. But the point is we always do it in this kind of very methodical, slow, deliberate way. We do not drop in the 82nd Airborne in the first 18 hours.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you. Mrs. Maloney.

Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I would like to follow-up on your line of questioning because seeing such havoc and catastrophe, by some reports it took the Guard 3 days, other reports 4 days to appear. In September 11th, both the Governor and the President called up the National Guard. They were, by some reports, the first people to get to September 11th following police and fire and they stayed there literally for months.

So my question to Dr. Harrald, and I think it is a question we on this committee need to look at, is when was the National Guard called up? Why did it take them so long to respond to this tragedy? Dr. Harrald, there were a lot of reports on television that it was a Category 4 hurricane. For days they were saying to evacuate, evacuate, everyone must leave.

Are you aware of any realistic plan that was put in place to help those residents evacuate who did not have their own car? You saw hundreds, thousands of people who were not able to leave. Their response was, "There was no way for us to leave. We did not have a car. We did not have a bus. We had no transportation."

It appears to me, with a Category 4 hurricane coming, you would be thinking about how to send in some type of force to help the poor, to help the sick, the frail, the residents who were in hospitals,

of babies who died in incubators. You were telling the world this is a Category 4, yet it appears from watching this that no plans were put in place to help the frail, the elderly, the babies, the sick, the poor leave the catastrophic area. Were you aware of any effort in that area?

Dr. HARRALD. Well, yes. By coincidence, we are working as a partner with the Hazard Center at the University of New Orleans. Professor Laska, who you can go on the Web and get. She has worked the simulations and the predictions of this event. Her home and her university are now flooded out. So that is one of the ironies of working on this.

One of the things that she was working on and seeking money to do, in fact we were partnering to work with this, and I was just talking to Barbara Childs-Pair, the director of emergency management for the District, my comment that I made earlier that preparing the government is not preparing the community and the ability to communicate with the community—people did not leave because they did not hear, they did not believe, they could not, they did not trust.

But they are there and we knew they were going to be there. Professor Laska was working with the city government of New Orleans to develop the plans, different than preparation, there were plans, there were concepts, there were ideas, but nothing——

Mrs. MALONEY. There were plans, but were there buses sent in to take the sick out of the hospital, to take the poor out of the nursing homes, to take the frail and elderly that were stuck there?

Moving to another point, and it appears there were plans but no one implemented those plans, is what I am reading.

Dr. HARRALD. Preparation is not planning, that is right.

Mrs. MALONEY. Since I would say 2002, there have been reports of FEMA employees with considerable expertise and experience being replaced with politically connected novices and contractors. We read in the paper today that Michael Brown, even though he was invited to testify before us, according to one paper is at a spa, and Joe Albaugh, his predecessor, was the chief of the campaign for election of President Bush.

Do you agree with these reports that FEMA has been losing its talent and experience to political appointees? And do you believe there should be a requirement that the Director of FEMA have some experience in managing disasters, have experience in management and types of plans and being prepared?

And I want to give this question that has really galled me. All these reports are coming out that everybody is so surprised, "Oh, I am shocked, absolutely shocked that the levees broke in New Orleans and that there was a flood." Yet there were many, many reports of a Category 4 hurricane. I just want to know, should people, Federal officials, or political, or professionals, or whatever, been surprised that the levees breached as a result of a Category 4 hurricane hitting New Orleans?

Dr. HARRALD. Given the situation of the water in Lake Pontchartrain and the rain, no, I think this was certainly a scenario. And the Army Corps of Engineers was very well aware, so again, it is the Federal family, so that if the Corps knew then FEMA knew.

But to your earlier set of questions, I will try to leap in and answer the pieces of it that I can. As I said earlier, these are important jobs, both the political appointed jobs and the career civil service jobs. These are the people that we are trusting to lead our Nation's response to catastrophic events. They are no less important than military jobs.

My background, it may be in my resume, I am a retired Coast Guard Captain and I spent 26 years in the Coast Guard. To see that we expect leaders in some positions to have extensive experience and leaders in similarly complex positions not mystifies me.

FEMA has had, as all agencies do, but FEMA particularly, and some of this is just timing, retirements and people leaving. It has been pointed out that Bruce Baughman, who was the Director of Operations for FEMA for many years, left FEMA and became the chief emergency manager for Alabama where he has been very successful. Charlie Hess, who replaced him, left to work in Iraq.

And so a number of very key people have left over the last couple of years and there has been an experience drain. Whose responsibility is it to monitor that? Whose responsibility is it to ensure that we have the leadership capacity to deal with these events I think is a legitimate question.

Mrs. MALONEY. FEMA used to be a cabinet level position. Yet under the reorganization with Homeland Security, it has now become a sub-department. It used to be independent, it is no longer independent. So, Dr. Harrald, do you believe that FEMA has lost some of its focus on natural disaster preparedness and response after it was absorbed into the Department of Homeland Security?

Dr. HARRALD. I think as a Nation we have lost the focus on natural disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response. We respond as a people to the last problem, and, as you are very well aware, the last problem was September 11th and the Congress and the administrative part of the Federal Government has put that as a priority.

I think there is a tradeoff. FEMA as an independent agency is a very small agency. That access depends on the administration. It has gone through a history of being very effective, very ineffective in cycles. I think, as Dr. Carafano says, there is at least the potential of strengthening and networking within the Department of Homeland Security. But the thing that is missing is really the ability to focus these efforts in a catastrophic situation.

Mrs. MALONEY. My time is up. But from your testimony it seems clear that the flooding threat to New Orleans was well known, predicted that the levees would break with a Category 4.

Dr. HARRALD. Dr. Laska and I participated in a briefing with Senate and House aides last June. We did a briefing on the simulations up here on the Hill.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. Mr. Shays.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. Both of you are outstanding witnesses. Dr. Carafano, nice to see you for the second time this week. I mean no offense by this, but there is a saying that someone said to me one time, they said, "You may not be right, but you are never in doubt." [Laughter.]

You are the most confident person when you say all that you say, and I find I agree with 90 percent of it. But I am surprised that my colleague from New York, who I work so closely with, talks

about failures but it is always the Federal Government. It is not true that about 90 percent of the first responders are State and local? Are they not the ones who have the first response, and are they not about 90 percent of the response? And then does not the Federal Government step in to provide financial assistance?

Dr. CARAFANO. Well, that is true. FEMA basically writes checks and lets contracts. They do not show up with a lot of material support.

Mr. SHAYS. Do they command an army?

Dr. CARAFANO. No.

Mr. SHAYS. Do they control the National Guard?

Dr. CARAFANO. No. I think the best way to answer this question is I think the one greatest mistake that we could make is to compare September 11th to Katrina. In September 11th, at least Rudy Giuliani had a pile to stand on.

Mr. SHAYS. And I would like to point out that Joe Albaugh was the head of FEMA at the time, who happened to be the former Chief of Staff of the President, and he did a heck of a good job. So with all due respect, he was there, give him some credit.

Dr. CARAFANO. In September 11th, you had intact infrastructure, you had a very small geographic area, you had a mayor who could easily command and control the city, he could turn to major cities around and draw all kinds of assets. So, in a sense, it was the perfect storm for the kind of a disaster like that.

Katrina is totally different. State and local capacity is almost wiped out. So now you are looking at a different set of core competencies for State and local leaders. In a normal catastrophe, the core competency in State and local leaders is to use the resources at hand effectively, organize them, do a methodical assessment, and then turn to the Federal Government and say this is what I need.

In a catastrophic disaster, State and local leaders have to go in and establish ad hoc command and control, do some kind of rapid assessment, and then somehow try to work with the Federal people to get in resources in a very, very quick way. And again I will go back to my basic point, our National Response System is not designed to get massive amounts of national aid in, whether Federal or from other States, in that very few hours.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. Dr. Harrald.

Dr. HARRALD. In a sense, the primary Federal official, which in this case was the Director of FEMA, does command an army under the National Response Plan. The defense assets, he or she can task DOD for military assets as determined at the scene.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me be clear on that because that is important to know. Does he command them, or does he say——

Dr. HARRALD. He tasks them. They will be under the command of their commander.

Mr. SHAYS. And tasks, meaning what? We need you?

Dr. HARRALD. We need you, we need these assets, we need boats, we need helicopters, we need whatever. So the determination of need. One of the things we have done——

Mr. SHAYS. So he determines need.

Dr. HARRALD. He determines need. And the National Response Plan, the successor to the Federal Response Plan, allows him or

her to task the appropriate agency, appropriate emergency support function to get those assets.

I somewhat disagree with Dr. Carafano, because the whole effort over the last 2 years has been to take the Federal Response Plan, which was admittedly slow with the 72-hours aspect, and particularly as we get into the catastrophic incident planning, to close that window. And I think one of the messages of Katrina is we have not done it.

Mr. SHAYS. Who has the capacity to close that window, that is what I need to know?

Dr. HARRALD. Well, I think that is a Federal Government responsibility and a State responsibility.

Mr. SHAYS. Within the Federal Government, would that have been head of DHS?

Dr. HARRALD. Yes. Yes.

Mr. SHAYS. Do you want to respond?

Dr. CARAFANO. I think the answer to the question is the National Guard. Again, I think one of the biggest mistakes we could take away from this is that to catastrophic response we need to stockpile lots of stuff all over the country. Because what will happen is the stuff that is stockpiled, you know, build it up in the State and local governments, all that will happen is that no matter how much you buildup, if it is a catastrophic disaster, it might get all destroyed and you still have to move stuff in. And it is enormously inefficient to have State and local governments and the private sector stockpile masses of big things for catastrophic disaster.

Mr. SHAYS. I am going to ask you—in my mind, the chairman can do a crossword puzzle while he is talking with you, I have to think a little longer. You spoke too quickly when you started running down all the different categories of National Guard. I want to know, in my simple mind, the National Guard is a militia under the Governor. The Governor instantly can call in the National Guard, does not need permission from anybody, just does it. I have been led to believe that it is possible the President could nationalize the National Guard within a State, but I am not quite sure how that happens. So walk me through slowly, and I may interrupt you.

Dr. CARAFANO. It has happened before. President Eisenhower, for example, when the Governor was ordering the troops to keep Black children out of the school, the President nationalized the National Guard and said you now work for me, take the children to school.

Mr. SHAYS. Let me ask this question directly. It would be false to say that the President needed permission from the Governor in order to empower and command the National Guard to take action?

Dr. CARAFANO. No. I actually think the law is very flexible on this point. The President does have authority where he can go in and where he wishes he can usurp the sovereignty of the Governor and send forces in.

Mr. SHAYS. If any time demanded it, in my judgment, that was the time.

Dr. CARAFANO. Well, that is the tough question. It is——

Mr. SHAYS. It would not have been tough for me. Because you basically had a Governor saying help, help, help, and a mayor saying help, help, help. In fact, they were doing more than that. They were going after the Federal Government for not being there. So

if I were President, in my own mind I would say, fine, let us do it.

Dr. CARAFANO. There are two problems with that. One is that to know that the Governor and mayor have failed may not be immediately apparent and may take days. And if you want to argue the mayor and Governor failed in this case, go back and look at the chronology and when were we sure that the mayor and Governor had failed. And the answer is probably, if you believe that, it is probably going to be in the 72-hour range. Well, quite frankly, by that time the Federal stuff is getting there anyway.

Mr. SHAYS. OK. Walk me through it. The National Guard, the Governor can do it right away, the President, on the other end of the extreme, can nationalize it. So the Governor can empower it as the Governor, the President can nationalize the National Guard. What is in between? You gave about four categories of how you do it. Are those the only two ways?

Dr. CARAFANO. There are three ways. The Governor can do it under his own authority but he has to pay for it. He can basically have an agreement with the President to do it, they are still under his authority but the Federal Government pays for it, which is Title 32. Or the President can do it under his authority.

Again, I think when the analysis is done we are going to find who the National Guard was working for to me is not going to be the crux of the problem. To me, the crux of the problem is going to be the time-space distance and how quickly we can mobilize and deploy forces there and get it done. We may find that we may have lost an hour or a day in making the decision to ask for the forces. But I still think that we would never have been able to close the 72-hour gap with the National Guard as we have them structured today because they cannot close the time-space distance.

Mr. SHAYS. I will just say, and I am going to conclude, it would strike me that as soon as we saw a disaster, as soon as we saw the incredible flooding, the National Guard in region probably was in a pretty desperate circumstance, and I would have thought that we would have been mobilizing the National Guard from around the country and sending them down. Now I think we had testimony from the military that they did that among the standing army; they just did it.

Could I indulge you, Mr. Chairman, one last point?

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Sure.

Mr. SHAYS. Does the President have the capability to send standing army down there under his command?

Dr. CARAFANO. Sure he does. And also it is in the law that local commanders can respond without any authority whatsoever. I was at Fort Sill, OK during the Murrah Office bombing and General Dubia was the Commander at Fort Sill, OK, he had troops on the road within 30 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. Standing army, not National Guard?

Dr. CARAFANO. Yes, active duty. And the way the law reads is if it is imminent threat of loss of life or people are in danger, the military can just put people on the road and execute and then worry about the thing later.

Mr. SHAYS. Did you want to make a comment?

Dr. HARRALD. I think one of the aspects of the National Guard is recognizing that in each State the relationship between the National Guard and emergency management is slightly different. The resources that the National Guard have in a State are different and in many cases they are kind of core function. For example, the National Guard is the logistics of the emergency manager in North Carolina. And so stepping in and taking that away could, if a State was near to failure, you could really push it over the edge by taking control over the National Guard away.

Dr. CARAFANO. Could I just make one quick comment? A resource that we never talk about, the Constitution authorizes every State to have guards and militias that are not the National Guard. New York, for example, has a naval militia which actually did terrific work on September 11th and was a real lifesaver. Some States have them, some States do not. Some of them are OK, some of them are coffee clubs. There is no national standard. And it is another layer of volunteer group and a backup to the National Guard that might be useful. The National Guard in the past has not liked them because they do not want to compete for resources.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. Let me just say I find this fascinating and there is lots to be looked at. Both of you were excellent witnesses. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. Mr. Gutknecht, followed by Mr. Marchant.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to be brief. I just concur with my colleague from Connecticut, your testimony has been excellent. Dr. Carafano, I really want to reiterate that it bothers me sometimes when people compare what happened in September 11th in New York City, where you are essentially talking about an eight square block area, relatively easy to confine, there was no breakdown in communications or command and control, and at the Pentagon the same circumstance, you are talking about a relatively small area, as bad as those national catastrophes were. To compare that to an area that literally has devastated the size of the State of Wyoming, it just amazes me sometimes that even the national media gives that credibility. They are two entirely different kinds of things.

I do want to reiterate also, and I do not necessarily have a question so much, that one of my observations is that once the National Guard and the regular forces were on the ground with adequate command and control, with the supplies that were needed, it seems to me things started to get better a lot faster.

And the one thing that I hope will ultimately come out of this—and I think, Dr. Carafano, you just made the point that there are differences between the State militias and guards or whatever terms that they use—but it may well be an obligation of us at the congressional level and the Federal Government ultimately to put in place as part of the Guard some kind of emergency response packages, if you will, pre-positioned around the country that we can get into some of these places.

Because this will happen again. It may be Louisiana next time, and it might be Florida next time, it could be North Carolina, we do not know. But these kinds of things are going to happen and we have to make certain that we can respond and get the stuff on

the ground, not in 72 hours necessarily, although in some of these cases we are talking longer than that.

So I do not have a question. You may want to respond to that. But again, I think your testimony has been excellent, and we thank you for coming.

Dr. CARAFANO. I just have two very quick comments. One is, one of the reasons why we have not better prepared the National Guard to respond to catastrophic terrorism is that is what a lot of mayors and Governors did not want and a lot of fire chiefs and police chiefs did not want. They all stood up and said, no, no, we are the first responders, we need the money, give it to us, if this happens we are going to be the guys, we are going to take care of this.

When you look at the scenarios, you never write a scenario in which you fail and have to call in the National Guard. And I kept telling people, I said, look, what is going to happen is that we are going to get to a scenario like this and we are going to collapse and they are going to turn around and scream where is the cavalry at, and they are going to scream that you are not there. That is part of the reason why we have not moved this forward, because people have not demanded that we structure the National Guard to do that.

The other thing I remind people of is if you remember during the Gulf war when we made the pause in the road to Baghdad and everybody was screaming how come people are not getting MREs and gas and everything. It is because it was a war zone, and there was a time-distance problem, and it was destroyed infrastructure, and there was a lot of confusion. You just cannot magicly make things appear in there like you beam it down on Star Trek. That is the exact same problem you had here.

Again, one of the terrible things I hear is, geez, if we had just turned it over to the military everything would have been solved. Because they see, like now, the military finally gets there and they set things up. And I absolutely agree that in a catastrophic disaster the military in that first 72 hours is the best resource to throw at the problem.

But if we want to throw the military at the problem in the first 72 hours, we are going to have to structure a National Guard that can do that. And it is not a trivial problem. The National Guard we have today cannot do that, just like the Army cannot drive from Kuwait to Baghdad through a war zone in 20 minutes. The National Guard cannot move halfway across the country and deliver cases of Avian in 26 hours.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Let me just pursue that because I think that really is ultimately the task of the Congress to sort this out, who is responsible for what, and who can do certain functions the best. And what we do not need is several layers all trying to say that they can do it and then ultimately finding out that when you have everybody saying that you can do it, nobody is getting it done. That is the problem.

And I think this is an issue that we have to spend some time thinking about, bringing in some outside experts, and really beginning to define in these kinds of circumstances who is going to be responsible for what and knowing that in advance so that everybody is on the same page.

Dr. CARAFANO. I just think it is inefficient for anybody other than the military to buildup a response to catastrophic event because for everybody else it is inefficient for them to hang on to those massive amounts of resources that may sit around forever and do nothing. But the thing about the military, whether it is medical, or security, they can use those for other things. If there is no catastrophic disaster, there are lots of things we can always use our military to do with those kinds of resources.

Dr. HARRALD. If I can add. One of the things that will come out of Katrina is just the matter of scale with it. We were sitting at the Red Cross yesterday looking the number of shelter days and meals fed compared to everything else that they have done.

The Coast Guard Air Station, New Orleans, rescued more people last week than they had done in the entire history of the Air Station, which has been about 60 years. The scale of this is truly beyond the charts. And we have done the planning assumptions and the issue, but nobody has stepped up and said what resources really do we require if we have a million people we have to feed tomorrow. And I would suggest, yes, the military have the mobility and agility.

The other alternative is to bring some of that back in to the emergency management forces and to the non-government agencies. Because the military does not bring in a focus on the customer, a focus on the victim, that is not their job. They can move resources, they can move people, they can bring things, but that is not the end game.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you. Mr. Marchant.

Mr. MARCHANT. Yes. My question is, have you both examined the major disaster and evacuation plans of the top 10 cities in the Nation?

Dr. HARRALD. No. The only evacuation plan I have examined in general specifically is Washington. We have done some work in San Francisco. Basically, the issue was not evacuation in that because you are not going to go anywhere in a major earthquake. And I have looked at historical evacuations, yes. I have a student doing that very issue right now.

Dr. CARAFANO. I have not looked at any specific plans. I have talked to emergency managers in some major cities like Washington, Kansas City, and San Francisco. I have also looked at the historical data, on which there is an enormous amount. This is actually a global competency. Lots of governments evacuate masses of cities, a lot of them do it a lot more frequently than we do. So there is actually a lot of data on this issue.

Mr. MARCHANT. Is a key part of any of the plan a gathering place, such as the Astrodome, that every city has that is at least a primary or a secondary gathering point?

Dr. CARAFANO. Correct me if I am wrong, John, but I think if you have seen one mass evacuation plan, you have seen one mass evacuation plan. They are all different.

Dr. HARRALD. Washington, for example, is doing what people in New Orleans were trying to do as the next step, is more local gathering places where people knew churches, community halls, places

where people would go locally and resources would come to them. That seems to be the planning. I think that is the way to go.

Dr. CARAFANO. Could I just make a point. There are three problems I just wanted to highlight in any mass evacuation plan. One is the send in/send out problem. One of the things New Orleans did to aid mass evacuation, it is a lesson learned from its first exercise, is it counterflowed all its roads so that everybody was headed out. So the problem of why did you not just send in trucks to go get the other people, well the problem is you were so focused on the outflow of the traffic, trying to inflow additional resources to evacuate people is more of a problem.

The second one, and this is almost unique to hurricanes, any time you move masses of people you put them at risk. This is the reason why in war most of the people who die in war are civilians and most of them die when they are displaced from their homes and they die of dehydration, disease, and other things. So the last thing you ever want to do if you do not have to is take people out of their environment and make them a refugee. Because you are always more at risk when you are a refugee.

So it is always a very, very difficult decision whether to move people or not. The problem with storms always is if they change the path in the last minute, you might actually be creating victims by unintentionally moving them into the storm path. So it is always sort of a Hobson's choice.

And then the other point, that was pointed out in the first panel, is there is the cry wolf syndrome. People react to risk communications that they believe are understandable, credible, and actionable. So if they understand this is a message meant for me, if it is credible and they really believe it is something they should do, and if it is actionable and there is something they can do to make themselves better, the data tells us they will do that.

The problem with an evacuation order is the understandable part is no big deal, the actionable part for some people is a big deal, but the credibility thing, and mayors are always worried about well if I evacuate and nothing happens, are they going to believe me next time.

Mr. MARCHANT. The question I have is if the evacuation is ordered and they are given a place to go, and it is known ahead of time that is the place they are going to be told to go, why there is not some planning for water, some MREs, and just some rudimentary survival tools that are in place year round for that to take place? And since September 11th, there have been hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars given out across the country to cities to first responders, and I think justifiably so.

Mr. Chairman, I think maybe if we had some information about the major cities in the United States that have received first responder aid and——

Chairman TOM DAVIS. I think that is something we need to compile. Unfortunately, I think you will find some minor cities as well that have gotten the aid.

Mr. MARCHANT. Yes. And what they did with the money, did it go all toward terrorism, was it toward this kind of disaster? Thank you.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Thank you very much. Mrs. Maloney, do you want to do a followup question before we go to markup?

Mrs. MALONEY. Just as a balance here. The gentlemen mentioned the National Response Plan, and you are both familiar with it, and a key part of that plan is when you make a decision that it is an incident of national significance which then triggers the Federal coordination. But it appears that this designation was not made until 36 hours after Hurricane Katrina struck. This is according to a memo issued by Secretary Chertoff, and I would like to put this in the record.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Without objection, it will be in the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

Secretary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

August 30, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

FROM: Michael Chertoff

SUBJECT: Designation of Principal Federal Official for Hurricane Katrina

As you know, the President has established the "White House Task Force on Hurricane Katrina Response." He will meet with us tomorrow to launch this effort. The Department of Homeland Security, along with other Departments, will be part of the task force and will assist the Administration with its response to Hurricane Katrina.

In accordance with the guidance provided in the National Response Plan (NRP), I hereby declare Hurricane Katrina an Incident of National Significance and designate Michael Brown, Under Secretary for Emergency Preparedness and Response (EP&R), as the Principal Federal Official (PFO) for incident management purposes during the response and recovery operations for Hurricane Katrina.

As stated in the NRP, the PFO serves as my representative locally and coordinates Federal activities relevant to the response and recovery efforts. The specific roles and responsibilities of the PFO include:

- Ensuring overall coordination of Federal domestic incident management activities and resource allocation on scene;
- Ensuring seamless integration of Federal incident management activities in support of State, local, and tribal requirements;
- Providing strategic guidance to Federal entities and facilitating interagency conflict resolution, as necessary, to enable timely Federal assistance to State, local, and tribal authorities;
- Serving as a primary, although not exclusive, point of contact for Federal interface with State, local, and tribal government officials, the media, and the private sector for incident management;
- Providing real-time incident information, through the support of the on-scene Federal incident management structure, to the Secretary of Homeland Security through the Homeland Security Operations Center and the Interagency Incident Management Group, as required; and
- Coordinating the overall Federal public communications strategy at the State, local, and tribal levels.

The PFO does not impede nor impact the authorities of other Federal officials to coordinate directly with their department or agency chain of command or to execute their duties and responsibilities under law.

I am confident that Under Secretary Brown will provide the leadership necessary to ensure an effective and efficient incident response. I request that you provide him your fullest measure of support in the execution of these important responsibilities.

Please contact Bob Shea, Operations and Response Division Director, Operational Integration Staff, at 202-254-5278 or Robert.shea@dhs.gov with any questions.

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Mrs. MALONEY. Thank you. I would like to ask Dr. Harrald, based on your experience, what do you think about this 36-hour delay?

Dr. HARRALD. Well, unfortunately, history does repeat itself a little bit. I was on Hurricane Andrew, which happened a week after the Federal Response Plan came out and that was still in shrink wrap at the time, and an awful lot of State and local and even national officials really did not understand how that worked. The National Contingency Plan arguably failed at the Exxon-Valdez and was rewritten and revised after.

One of the things we have to look at is systemically did this plan fail. Was it too centralized? Was it too bureaucratic? As I said, I worked with the State and local. You are looking at the top, but look——

Mrs. MALONEY. But my question was about the delay, the 36 hour delay.

Dr. HARRALD. I think people did not understand clearly the significance that designation had on authorities and actions. It was either a miscommunication or a misunderstanding.

Mrs. MALONEY. Should the designation have been on August 27th when the National Hurricane Center predicted the hurricane and that it would strike——

Dr. HARRALD. When the declaration of emergency was made, it would have made sense to make that, yes.

Mrs. MALONEY. Now in this memo from Secretary Chertoff, he designates Michael Brown, the head of FEMA, as the principal Federal official in charge of the Federal response under the National Response Plan. And if Mr. Brown was not designated as the principal person in charge until after August 30th, who was in charge of the Federal response under the National Response Plan for the 3-days before that?

Dr. HARRALD. The Secretary.

Mrs. MALONEY. So it would have been Secretary Chertoff. Today's paper has an article in it where they are quoting Mr. Brown. In it, he describes his frantic calls to the White House asking for help, saying the locals have been overwhelmed, that we need more support, we need more help. I would like to place that into the record, too.

[The information referred to follows:]

The New York Times
nytimes.com

September 15, 2005

Ex-FEMA Chief Tells of Frustration and Chaos

By DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK
and SCOTT SHANE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14 - Hours after Hurricane Katrina passed New Orleans on Aug. 29, as the scale of the catastrophe became clear, Michael D. Brown recalls, he placed frantic calls to his boss, Michael Chertoff, the secretary of homeland security, and to the office of the White House chief of staff, Andrew H. Card Jr.

Mr. Brown, then director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said he told the officials in Washington that the Louisiana governor, Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, and her staff were proving incapable of organizing a coherent state effort and that his field officers in the city were reporting an "out of control" situation.

"I am having a horrible time," Mr. Brown said he told Mr. Chertoff and a White House official - either Mr. Card or his deputy, Joe Hagin - in a status report that evening. "I can't get a unified command established."

By the time of that call, he added, "I was beginning to realize things were going to hell in a handbasket" in Louisiana. A day later, Mr. Brown said, he asked the White House to take over the response effort.

He said he felt the subsequent appointment of Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honoré of the Army as the Pentagon's commander of active-duty forces began to turn the situation around.

In his first extensive interview since resigning as FEMA director on Monday under intense criticism, Mr. Brown declined to blame President Bush or the White House for his removal or for the flawed response.

"I truly believed the White House was not at fault here," he said.

He focused much of his criticism on Governor Blanco, contrasting what he described as her confused response with far more agile mobilizations in Mississippi and Alabama, as well as in Florida during last year's hurricanes.

But Mr. Brown's account, in which he described making "a blur of calls" all week to Mr. Chertoff, Mr. Card and Mr. Hagin, suggested that Mr. Bush, or at least his top aides, were informed early and repeatedly by the top federal official at the scene that state and local authorities were overwhelmed and that the overall response was going badly.

A senior administration official said Wednesday night that White House officials recalled the conversations with Mr. Brown but did not believe they had the urgency or desperation he described in

the interview.

"There's a general recollection of him saying, 'They're going to need more help,' " said the official, who insisted on anonymity because of the delicacy of internal White House discussions.

Mr. Brown's version of events raises questions about whether the White House and Mr. Chertoff acted aggressively enough in the response. New Orleans convulsed in looting and violence after the hurricane, and troops did not arrive in force to restore order until five days later.

The account also suggests that responsibility for the failure may go well beyond Mr. Brown, who has been widely pilloried as an inexperienced manager who previously oversaw horse show judges.

Mr. Brown was removed by Mr. Chertoff last week from directing the relief effort. A 50-year-old lawyer and Republican activist who joined FEMA as general counsel in 2001, Mr. Brown said he had been hobbled by limitations on the power of the agency to command resources.

With only 2,600 employees nationwide, he said, FEMA must rely on state workers, the National Guard, private contractors and other federal agencies to supply manpower and equipment.

He said his biggest mistake was in waiting until the end of the day on Aug. 30 to ask the White House explicitly to take over the response from FEMA and state officials.

Of his resignation, Mr. Brown said: "I said I was leaving because I don't want to be a distraction. I want to focus on what happened here and the issues that this raises."

Governor Blanco said Wednesday that she took responsibility for failures and missteps in the immediate response to the hurricane and pledged a united effort to rebuild areas ravaged by the storm, adding, "at the state level, we must take a careful look at what went wrong and make sure it never happens again." A spokesman for Ms. Blanco denied Mr. Brown's description of disarray in Louisiana's emergency response operation. "That is just totally inaccurate," said Bob Mann, the governor's communications director. "Everything that Mr. Brown needed in terms of resources or information from the state, he had those available to him."

In Washington, Mr. Chertoff's spokesman, Russ Knocke, said there had been no delay in the federal response. "We pushed absolutely everything we could," Mr. Knocke said, "every employee, every asset, every effort, to save and sustain lives."

As Mr. Brown recounted it, the weekend before New Orleans's levees burst, FEMA sent an emergency response team of 10 or 20 people to Louisiana to review evacuation plans with local officials.

By Saturday afternoon, many residents were leaving. But as the hurricane approached early on Sunday, Mr. Brown said he grew so frustrated with the failure of local authorities to make the evacuation mandatory that he asked Mr. Bush for help.

"Would you please call the mayor and tell him to ask people to evacuate?" Mr. Brown said he asked Mr. Bush in a phone call.

"Mike, you want me to call the mayor?" the president responded in surprise, Mr. Brown said. Moments later, apparently on his own, the mayor, C. Ray Nagin, held a news conference to announce a

mandatory evacuation, but it was too late, Mr. Brown said. Plans said it would take at least 72 hours to get everyone out.

When he arrived in Baton Rouge on Sunday evening, Mr. Brown said, he was concerned about the lack of coordinated response from Governor Blanco and Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, the adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard.

"What do you need? Help me help you," Mr. Brown said he asked them. "The response was like, 'Let us find out,' and then I never received specific requests for specific things that needed doing."

The most responsive person he could find, Mr. Brown said, was Governor Blanco's husband, Raymond. "He would try to go find stuff out for me," Mr. Brown said.

Governor Blanco's communications director, Mr. Mann, said that she was frustrated that Mr. Brown and others at FEMA wanted itemized requests before acting. "It was like walking into an emergency room bleeding profusely and being expected to instruct the doctors how to treat you," he said.

On Monday night, Mr. Brown said, he reported his growing worries to Mr. Chertoff and the White House. He said he did not ask for federal active-duty troops to be deployed because he assumed his superiors in Washington were doing all they could. Instead, he said, he repeated a dozen times, "I cannot get a unified command established."

The next morning, Mr. Brown said, he and Governor Blanco decided to take a helicopter into New Orleans to see the mayor and assess the situation. But before the helicopter took off, his field coordinating officer, or F.C.O., called from the city on a satellite phone. "It is getting out of control down here; the levee has broken," the staff member told him, he said.

The crowd in the Superdome, the city's shelter of last resort, was already larger than expected. But Mr. Brown said he was relieved to see that the mayor had a detailed list of priorities, starting with help to evacuate the Superdome.

Mr. Brown passed the list on to the state emergency operations center in Baton Rouge, but when he returned that evening he was surprised to find that nothing had been done.

"I am just screaming at my F.C.O., 'Where are the helicopters?' " he recalled. " 'Where is the National Guard? Where is all the stuff that the mayor wanted?' "

FEMA, he said, had no helicopters and only a few communications trucks. The agency typically depends on state resources, a system he said worked well in the other Gulf Coast states and in Florida last year.

Meanwhile, "unbeknownst to me," Mr. Brown said, at some point on Monday or Tuesday the hotels started directing their remaining guests to the convention center - something neither FEMA nor local officials had planned.

At the same time, the Superdome was degenerating into "gunfire and anarchy," and on Tuesday the FEMA staff and medical team in New Orleans called to say they were leaving for their own safety.

That night, Mr. Brown said, he called Mr. Chertoff and the White House again in desperation. "Guys,

this is bigger than what we can handle," he told them, he said. "This is bigger than what FEMA can do. I am asking for help."

"Maybe I should have screamed 12 hours earlier," Mr. Brown said in the interview. "But that is hindsight. We were still trying to make things work."

By Wednesday morning, Mr. Brown said, he learned that General Honoré was on his way. While the general did not have responsibility for the entire relief effort and the Guard, his commanding manner helped mobilize the state's efforts.

"Honoré shows up and he and I have a phone conversation," Mr. Brown said. "He gets the message, and, boom, it starts happening."

Mr. Brown said that in one much-publicized gaffe - his repeated statement on live television on Thursday night, Sept. 1, that he had just learned that day of thousands of people at New Orleans's convention center without food or water - "I just absolutely misspoke." In fact, he said, he learned about the evacuees there from the first media reports more than 24 hours earlier, but the reports conflicted with information from local authorities and he had no staff on the site until Thursday.

There were also conflicts with the Congressional delegations that wanted resources for their offices and districts, FEMA officials said. Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi said he "resisted aggressively" a decision by Mr. Brown to dispatch a Navy medical ship to Louisiana instead of his home state.

Mr. Brown acknowledged that he had been criticized for not ordering a complete evacuation or calling in federal troops sooner. But he said the storm made it hard to communicate and assess the situation.

"Until you have been there," he said, "you don't realize it is the middle of a hurricane."

Richard W. Stevenson contributed reporting from Washington for this article, and Eric Lipton from Baton Rouge, La.

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Mrs. MALONEY. I guess some of the questions that you really do not have the answer to is: Why it took them so long to call up the National Guard? Why they were not aware, even though all the scientists were predicting, the levees would break, that there would be water, how that did not come into account? And why they did not evacuate the poor, the sick, the children, the elderly that could not get out?

Dr. HARRALD. These are the questions I think we will have to look at. The only thing I can add to that is that the closer you get to the center of a major incident, the less you know. You know what you can see at some point. And the situational awareness, the ability to make the leap that Joe Becker of the Red Cross did, that this is really big, and I do not know what is going on but it is bigger than anything I know and I have to get everything moving, that sort of thought process did not happen at a number of levels of government.

Mrs. MALONEY. Even though CNN, CBS, ABC, NBC, all the cable shows were saying level 4 catastrophic emergency, evacuate, take care of people. Yet the Federal Government, the local government, the State government was not there.

Chairman TOM DAVIS. Mrs. Maloney, thank you very much.

Thank you. It has been a long day for you. This has been very, very helpful. Your testimony is excellent. We appreciate your efforts.

The record remains open for 7 days for Members to put their testimony in the record.

We will now adjourn this hearing.

[Whereupon, at 3:13 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

[The prepared statement of Hon. Candice S. Miller and additional information submitted for the hearing record follow:]

Statement
Rep. Candice Miller

Committee on Government Reform

"Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned From Katrina"
September 15, 2005

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today. First, I would like to express my sincere concern for the people along the Gulf Coast. While the cleanup effort will be ongoing for months, possibly years, we must assess what is being done in other cities to make sure that every possible action is being taken with regard to emergency management.

Our nation has been dealt a strong blow, both emotionally and physically. As well as, the impact on our nation economically will be felt in every corner. But, as we know from previous hardships, we will persevere!

As the federal government is currently dealing with how and what needs to be done along the Gulf Coast, this is our opportunity to examine other major cities and how they are prepared in the case of an emergency. The cities that will be discussed today have all dealt with major catastrophes at one point or another.

Each city must have an emergency plan in place and that plan should be re-evaluated to make certain that nothing is overlooked. What exactly has been learned from Hurricane Katrina that can be used to enhance the plans currently in place? And what communications systems will work according to the catastrophe? And after the

catastrophe, what role will the federal government play? The list goes on and on. There are many things that we must evaluate and discuss to ensure the American people that we have all of our ducks in a row!

We have seen the tragedies that were caused by hurricanes, earthquakes and even man-made catastrophes. Our first priority as representatives of the American people is to provide safety and assurance that emergency plans are in place and that we are ready to face the next catastrophe head on!

I am truly interested to hear the testimony of the witnesses before us today. We must overcome any hurdle to provide safety and assistance when our citizens are in need.

Thank you.

STATEMENT BY

TOM WORDEN
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER
CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

BEFORE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

REGARDING

HURRICANE KATRINA AND FUTURE USE OF THE
4.9 GHz PUBLIC SAFETY INTER-OPERABILITY FREQUENCY

ON

SEPTEMBER 15, 2005

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am Tom Worden, Chief Technology Officer for the California Office of Emergency Services, (OES) located in Sacramento, California. It is a huge shame the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. Especially in light of the fact that currently, there is technology available to provide wireless communication with or without power anywhere in the United States. Furthermore, it is important for everyone to understand that Congress has already approved a public safety inter-operability frequency of 4.9 GHz on a nationwide basis. If Louisiana and Mississippi had the equipment to access the 4.9 GHz communication system, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina would have been greatly diminished.

The 4.9 GHz public safety inter-operability frequency has the capability to by-pass all conventional communication systems and provide communication to emergency responders throughout entire metropolitan areas. In the instance of Hurricane Katrina, local police, firefighters, 911 dispatch centers, emergency responders, and other rescue workers could have had handheld devices that have access to this network, sending and receiving voice, video, graphics, intelligence, medical, and other forms of emergency data. Congress approved this technology immediately after September 11, 2001, however, states and localities do not have the money to implement this system that could have saved lives in Hurricane Katrina.

The 4.9 GHz public safety inter-operability frequency has been mandated to be in used across all Federal Agencies by the Executive Office of the President and is able to interface with the Federal Department of Homeland Security within hours of situations where there is no power or telephone communications. This 4.9 public safety inter-operability frequency can be even more enhanced by implementing additional compatible technology such as MetroNet6 programs. MetroNet6 programs can provide hospital and civilian access to communication in urban areas during emergencies. This capability, as we all know, would have been extremely helpful during Hurricane Katrina.

Congress should designate Homeland Security funds specifically for 4.9 GHz interoperability communication systems. Present day calculations suggest that $2 billion should be set aside specifically for nationwide 4.9 GHz in interoperability communication systems. Beyond Hurricane Katrina, this interoperable system can save lives in other national natural disasters such as earthquakes, forest fires, mudslides and terrorist attacks that threaten large metropolitan areas.

California has taken a leadership role in implementing the 4.9 GHz public safety inter-operability frequency and corresponding technology in Sacramento, in a working group consisting of the California Office of Emergency Services (OES), California Department of Homeland Security, the Elk Grove Community Services District Fire Department, and the MetroNet6 Working Group. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
JIM HAYNIE, PRESIDENT
(ARRL)
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR AMATEUR RADIO
BEFORE THE
HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON, DC
SEPTEMBER 15, 2005

Chairman Davis and Ranking Member Waxman, as President of ARRL, the National Association for Amateur Radio, it gives me great pleasure to provide this statement for the record to the Committee on the successful efforts of Amateur Radio operators providing communications for First Responders, Disaster Relief agencies, and countless individuals in connection with the Hurricane Katrina relief effort. As has been proven consistently and repeatedly in the past, when communications systems fail due to a wide-area or localized natural disaster, Amateur Radio works, right away, all the time. This report is not, therefore, a statement of concern about what must be changed or improved. It is, rather, a report on what is going right, and what works, in emergency communications in the Gulf Coast, and what can be depended on to work the next time there is a natural disaster, and the times after that.

Right now, an all-volunteer "army" of approximately 1,000 FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators is providing continuous high-frequency, VHF and UHF communications for State, local and Federal emergency workers in and around the affected area in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. These communications are provided for served agencies such as the American National Red Cross and the Salvation Army, and to facilitate interoperability between and among these agencies; First Responders; FEMA, VOAD (National Volunteers Active in Disasters) and other agencies. Trained volunteer Amateur Radio operators are also providing health and welfare communications from within the affected area to the rest of the United States and the world. In the past week, the Coast Guard, the Red Cross, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency all put out calls for volunteer Amateur Radio operators to provide communications, because phone lines and cell sites were inoperative, and public safety communications facilities were overwhelmed due to loss of repeater towers and the large number of First Responders in the area. Amateur Radio operators responded *en masse*: Approximately 200 Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) trained communicators responded to the Gulf Coast in the past week. The Red Cross has now said, a week after they issued the call, that they have enough radio operators and Amateur Radio communications facilities. The number of Amateur Radio operators providing communications in the three States, either deployed or awaiting relief duty on-site or at a reserve facility in Montgomery, Alabama, swelled from 800 to 1,000 in a week. Many more thousands of radio amateurs outside the affected area are regularly monitoring radio traffic and relaying thousands of messages concerning the welfare and location of victims.

The principal reason why Amateur Radio works when other communications systems fail during natural disasters is that Amateur Radio is not infrastructure-dependent, and is decentralized. Amateurs are trained in emergency communications. They are disciplined operators, and their stations are, in general, portable and reliable. High-frequency Amateur Radio communications, used substantially in this emergency communications effort, require no fixed repeaters, cable or wirelines. Portable repeaters for VHF and UHF communications can be provided via mobile facilities (many Amateur Radio groups have deployed communications vans in the Gulf Coast for precisely this purpose) in affected areas instantly. There are now approximately 670,000 licensees of the FCC in the Amateur Service at present, which assures the presence of Amateur stations in most areas of the country. Emergency communications are conducted not only by voice, but also by high-speed data transmissions using state-of-the-art digital communications software known as *WinLink*. As Motorola's Director of Communications and Public Affairs stated yesterday: "Amateur Radio communications benefit us all by having a distributed architecture and frequency agility that enables you to set up faster in the early phases of disaster recovery and can provide flexible and diverse communications...Motorola believes that the Amateur Radio spectrum provides valuable space for these important communications."

In Mississippi, FEMA dispatched Amateur Radio operators to hospitals and evacuation shelters to send emergency calls 24 hours per day. At airports in Texas and Alabama, radio amateurs track evacuees and notify the Baton Rouge operations center of their whereabouts so their families will be able to find them. Amateur Radio operators in New Orleans participated directly in locating stranded persons, because local cellphone calls could not be made by stranded victims due to the inoperative wireline systems in the area. The Red Cross deploys qualified amateur radio volunteers at its 250 shelter and feeding station locations, principally in Mississippi, Alabama and northern Florida.

The local 911 operators could not handle calls from relatives calling in from outside the affected area, so they passed those "health and welfare" inquiries to amateur radio operators stationed at the 911 call centers, for relay of information back to New Orleans to facilitate rescue missions for stranded persons.

Amateur Radio has provided a communications link between Coast Guard helicopters and emergency centers because the ambulance crews couldn't contact the helicopters directly. In Texas, Amateur Radio operators are working 24 hours per day in the Astrodome in Houston and the Reliant Center next door, and as well in the Harris County Emergency Operations Center. In San Antonio, at the Kelly Air Force Base, radio amateurs from Montana are providing local and national health and welfare communications for evacuees. These examples are repeated throughout the Gulf Coast and in the cities in the southern states receiving large numbers of evacuees.

The Salvation Army operates its own Amateur Radio communications system using Amateur Radio volunteers, known as SATERN. In the Hurricane Katrina effort, SATERN has joined forces with the federal SHARES program (SHAred RESources), which is a network of government, military and Military Affiliate Radio Service (MARS) radio stations. MARS is an organized network of Amateur Radio stations affiliated with the different branches of the armed forces to provide volunteer communications. SATERN has, in the Katrina relief effort, received

over 48,000 requests for emergency communications assistance, and the affiliation with the SHARES program allows the Salvation Army to utilize Federal frequencies to communicate with agencies directly. This is but one example of the innovative and reliable means by which Amateur Radio right now provides organized interoperability on a scope far beyond that now being planned for local and State public safety systems.

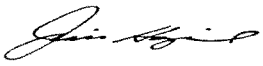
Amateur Radio is largely invisible to both the FCC and to Congress on a daily basis, because it is virtually self-regulating and self-administered. It is only during emergencies that the Amateur Radio Service is in the spotlight. At other times, emergency communications and technical self-training and advancement of telecommunications technology occupy licensees' time. For the first time ever, in recognition of the work of Amateur Radio Operators in this Hurricane Relief effort, the Corporation for National And Community Service (CNCS), which provides strategic critical support to volunteer organizations which in turn provide services to communities, has made a $100,000 grant supplement to ARRL to support the Katrina emergency communications efforts in the Gulf Coast. This enables ARRL to reimburse to a small degree, on a per diem basis, some of the expenses that radio amateurs incur personally in traveling to the Gulf Coast to volunteer their time and effort. The CNCS grant is an extension of ARRL's three-year, Homeland Security training grant, which has to date provided certification in emergency communication training protocols to approximately 5,500 Amateur Radio volunteers over the past three years.

ARRL wishes to commend the FCC's Enforcement Bureau for its efficient and successful efforts during the ongoing Hurricane relief in monitoring the Amateur Radio High Frequency bands to prevent or quickly remedy incidents of interference.

The Committee should be aware that this vast volunteer resource is always at the disposal of the Federal government. The United States absolutely can rely on the Amateur Radio Service. Amateur Radio provides immediate, high-quality communications that work every time, when all else fails.

Respectfully submitted,

ARRL, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR AMATEUR RADIO



By:_____
Jim Haynie, President

225 Main Street
Newington, CT 06111
(860) 594-0200

BROWARD COUNTY 2005

Hurricane Evacuation Map

BROWARD COUNTY FLORIDA

American Red Cross
Regional Hurricane Shelters

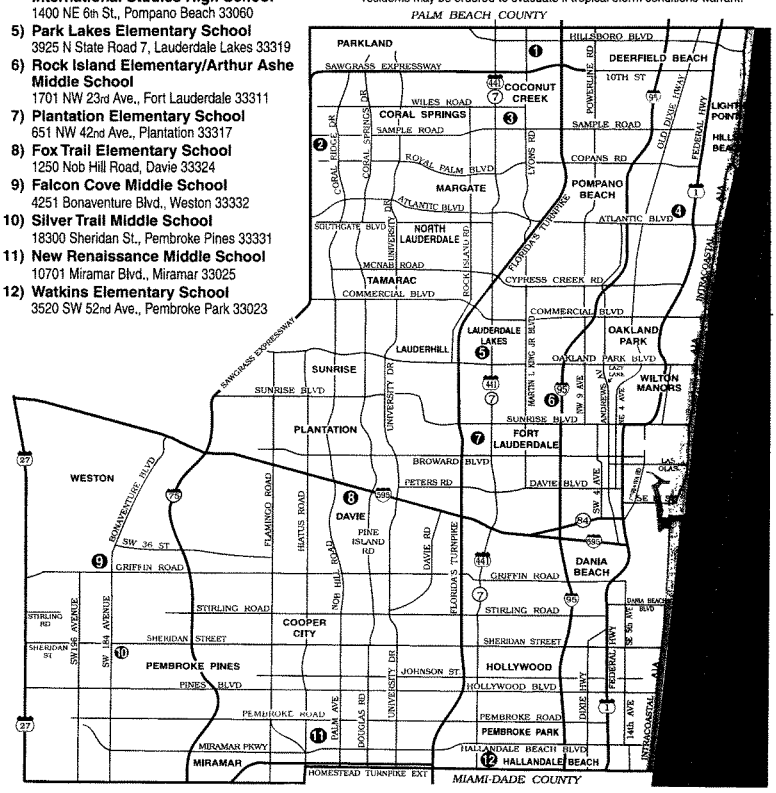
1) **Lyons Creek Middle School**
4333 Sol Press Blvd., Coconut Creek 33073
2) **Coral Glades High School**
2700 Sportsplex Dr, Coral Springs 33065
3) **Monarch High School**
5050 Wiles Road, Coconut Creek 33073
4) **Pompano Beach Institute of International Studies High School**
1400 NE 6th St., Pompano Beach 33060
5) **Park Lakes Elementary School**
3925 N State Road 7, Lauderdale Lakes 33319
6) **Rock Island Elementary/Arthur Ashe Middle School**
1701 NW 23rd Ave., Fort Lauderdale 33311
7) **Plantation Elementary School**
651 NW 42nd Ave., Plantation 33317
8) **Fox Trail Elementary School**
1250 Nob Hill Road, Davie 33324
9) **Falcon Cove Middle School**
4251 Bonaventure Blvd., Weston 33332
10) **Silver Trail Middle School**
18300 Sheridan St., Pembroke Pines 33331
11) **New Renaissance Middle School**
10701 Miramar Blvd., Miramar 33025
12) **Watkins Elementary School**
3520 SW 52nd Ave., Pembroke Park 33023

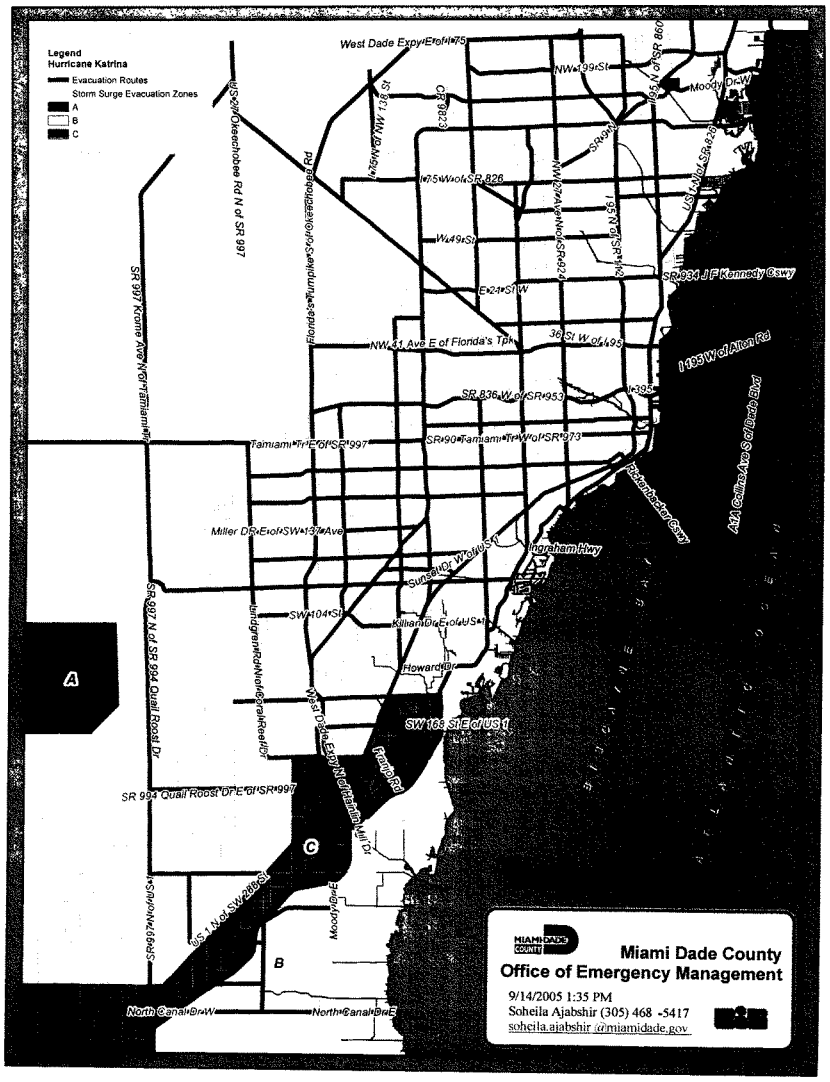
Broward Emergency Management Agency
201 N. W. 84th Avenue, Plantation, FL 33324
Telephone: 954-831-3900
Broward County Hurricane Hotline: 954-831-4000

☐ PLAN A Typically a Category 1-2 hurricane.

☐ PLAN B Typically a Category 3 or higher hurricane.

Those persons located in low lying areas or beside tidal bodies of water should seek shelter elsewhere if conditions warrant. ALL mobile home residents must evacuate in PLAN A and PLAN B. In addition, mobile home residents may be ordered to evacuate if tropical storm conditions warrant.

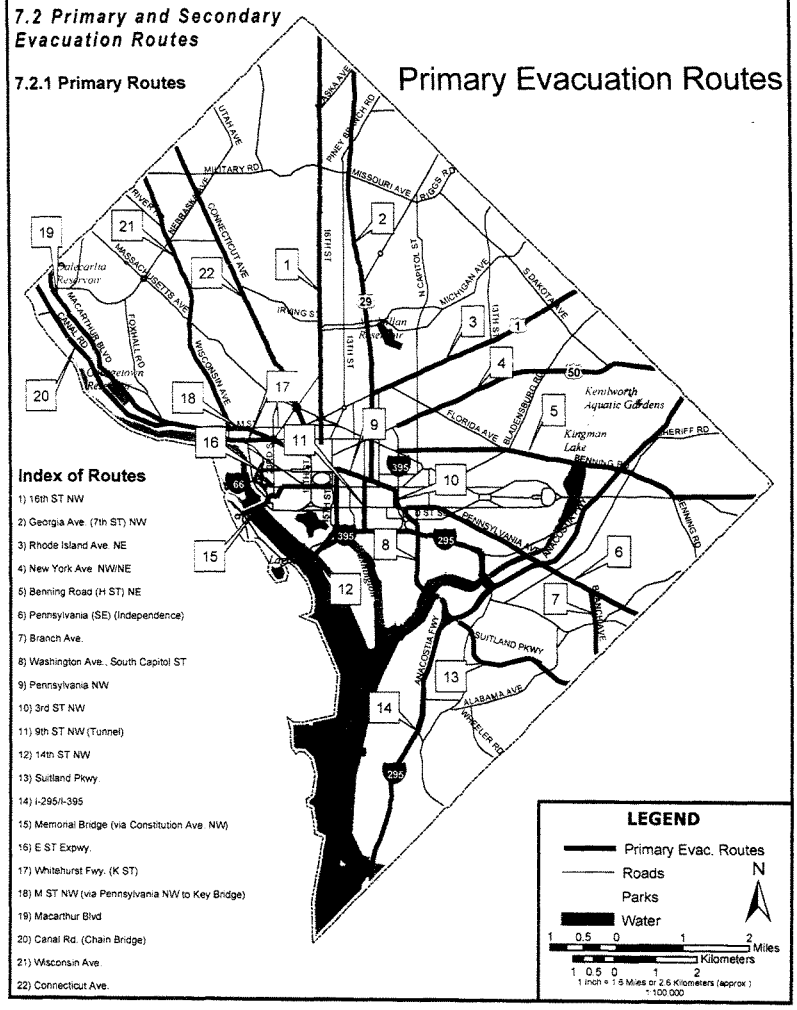



Legend
Hurricane Katrina
Evacuation Routes
Storm Surge Evacuation Zones
A
B
C
West Dade Expy/E of I-75
NW 199 St
Moody Dr W
I-75 W of SR 826
W 49 St
E 24 St W
NW 41 Ave E of Florida's Tpk
36 St W of 495
SR 836 W of SR 953
SR 90 Tamiami Trl W of SR 973
Tamiami Trl E of SR 997
Miller Dr E of SW 137 Ave
Ingraham Hwy
SW 104 St
Killian Dr E of US 1
Howard Dr
SW 168 St E of US 1
Florida Rd
SR 994 Quail Roost Dr E of SR 997
SR 997 Krome Ave W of Tamiami Trl
SR 997 N of SR 994 Quail Roost Dr
Orchid Dr
Moody Dr E
North Canal Dr W
North Canal Dr E
Biscayne Bay
Atlantic Ocean
Miami Dade County
Office of Emergency Management
9/14/2005 1:35 PM
Soheila Ajabshir (305) 468 -5417
soheila.ajabshir @miamidade.gov

District of Columbia

7.2 Primary and Secondary Evacuation Routes

7.2.1 Primary Routes



1700 Diagonal Road, Suite 650
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Fax: (703) 683-4074
Jdoss@bottledwater.org

September 13, 2005

Representative Tom Davis
2348 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-4611

Representative Henry Waxman
2204 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-4611

Dear Representatives Davis and Waxman:

We understand that the House Government Reform Committee will hold a hearing on September 15, 2005, to consider ways to improve the government's ability to provide relief to victims during natural disasters or other catastrophic events. This hearing comes in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and the many negative experiences bottled water producers had when attempting to provide relief products to those in need. We understand that the hearing will focus on what can be done in the future to ensure that needed relief is provided in a timely and efficient fashion. It will not be an investigation into what went wrong with the recent relief efforts.

The bottled water industry has always been at the forefront of relief efforts during natural disasters or other catastrophic events. This was certainly the case recently in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Many IBWA members immediately sprang into action and were bottling water around the clock to help meet the demand for clean, safe drinking water. However, many of our members experienced difficulties in getting information from federal agencies on where to deliver donated bottled water. IBWA raised this issue directly with an official at the Department of Homeland Security, who acknowledged that there were logistical problems and assured us that steps would be taken to correct the situation. However, rather than wait for the formal efforts to become more organized, IBWA members and staff made direct contacts with officials in the affected towns and cities, and the Louisiana and Mississippi Municipal Leagues, to provide bottled water to those in need.

As the House Government Reform Committee begins to examine how the federal government can better respond with relief efforts during natural disasters or other catastrophic events, it will be necessary to consider how to provide citizens with clean, safe drinking water. And bottled water is the best way to accomplish that goal.

Because IBWA represents the vast majority of bottled water producers in the United States, we would welcome the opportunity to be involved in any discussions or hearings aimed at establishing a workable system for delivering and distributing bottled water during natural

disasters or other catastrophic events. Our past experiences and technical expertise can help legislators and other government officials better understand the issues involved.

IBWA stands ready to assist you and the other members of the committee as you begin your important work.

Sincerely,

Joseph Doss

Joseph K. Doss
President

○